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Columbia University

FORUM

INVISIBLE LATIN AMERICA

Samuel B. Hay

THE LITTLE BREAD SCHOOLHOUSE

Richard Francis Collins

Albert Camus, William

Justin G. Lewis

Nonsense & Fortuna Aid

Norman A. Bailey

The Crescent, Fortna

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A Quarterly Journal of Fact and Opinion

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LETTERS

they have to learn new disciplines—psychological, moral, and political—which are as yet foreign to them.

PAUL GOODMAN
New York City

The title "Reckoning Your Bliss Point" was the inspiration of the editor, who regrets Mr. Goodman's displeasure.

• . . . Satiety in economic society is governed by the factor of want and the fear of want. Those who have been plagued by want for a prolonged period will glut themselves beyond the point of satiety when they have at last attained what has been so long denied them. Men born and raised in dire poverty often continue to amass wealth aimlessly till their dying day. If this goad to mental imbalance were removed, the Bliss Point for a great sector of society would be lowered.

MILTON NORWALK
1924 B. A., Columbia College
1925 M. A., Graduate Faculties
Bronx, New York

Word and spirit

• I should like to add a footnote to "Mark Twain: A Footnote" [Fall 1960].

Ghost writing is not [uncommon], but in this connection we usually think of two living human beings, one the writer and the other the one to whom a work is attributed. Works which are the result of psychic phenomena or attributed to the spirit world are rare, but there are at least two cases which might be of interest.

First, Frederick Spencer Oliver: His *A Dweller on Two Planets* he asserted to be a revelation from the spirit world, and he described himself as "an adept of the arcane and occult in the universe." For more than six pages he emphasized that the work was a true revelation from a spirit, one Phyllos, the Thibetan, to Oliver, who described himself as merely the "Amanuensis." A rival publisher published an edition of the work. When suit was brought to restrain this alleged plagiarism, the court said: "The law deals with reality and does not recognize communication with and the conveyance of legal rights by the spiritual world as

the basis for its judgment. Nevertheless, equity and good morals will not permit one who asserts something as a fact which he insists his readers believe as the real foundation for its appeal to those who may buy and read his work, to change that position for profit in a law suit." So Oliver lost his case.

In the Mark Twain case, Harpers' was in a different position, for it, as plaintiff, was endeavoring to support the rights of the living as against those who claimed through the spirit world.

In another case, Stewart Edward White claimed that he had received, through his wife as intermediary, communications from a spirit identified as "Gaelic." He incorporated these in a manuscript entitled *The Job of Living*. In an infringement suit involving the right to publish the manuscript, the court went off on the question whether or not there had been a publication by White of the work sufficient to throw it into the public domain. No direct finding was made on the subject of whether spirits can assign to earthly proprietors title to their ghostly writings.

In any event, the publishers of *Jap Herron* had no right to attribute the work to Mark Twain, for it is a settled principle of law that the name of an author can be used only on works written by him. The statutory protection of the Copyright Law does not extend to aliens domiciled in the spirit world. Under doctrines of unfair competition, our common law would protect Harpers' from this ghostly invasion of their rights to the use of the name Mark Twain.

PHILIP WITTENBERG
Lecturer in Law
School of General Studies

Jacobson and Berenson

• Just a note of thanks for the sensitive and extremely well-written memoir, "Being With Berenson" [Fall 1960]. Mr. Herbert L. Jacobson is too modest. Behind his self-effacing attitude lies a sharp mind and respect for old age and greatness—unusual in our age of the cult of immature heroes. . . .

PETER FINGESTEN
Pace College
New York City

Toward bliss

• Saul Engelbourg's article ["Reckoning Your Bliss Point"] in your Fall issue is excellent (apart from the idiotic title which is, no doubt, not the author's). The attempt he makes at the end to distinguish the individual's own "utility level" from the "utility level of other people" seems to me to be an ingenious and original stab in the direction of a new kind of calculation that is much needed. May I make a general observation?

It is perhaps unwise to continue to call this kind of discussion, or much of the discussion in Galbraith's *Affluent Society*, by the name of Economics. The case is probably that classical Political Economy is a completed science, like Euclidean geometry or the Aristotelian theory of the syllogism. Historically, the problems of political economy have been the allocation of resources in scarcity, the diminishing of scarcity, and the avoidance of fluctuation. In principle these problems are solved; and the sign is that our economists increasingly begin to think of individual values not conveniently subject to statistical handling, and cultural or even moral values not subject to such handling at all. It is a question of a word whether or not such topics should be called "economic," but the danger of calling them "economic" is that the economist-writers, who have a flair for them, and could be very valuable to society, have not yet realized that to treat such questions,

INVISIBLE LATIN AMERICA

The slippage of an entire continent toward economic dissolution has been obscured by the flaring fires of seemingly random revolutions—of which the Cuban was but one. When, asks the author, will we see the extent of the danger south of us?

by SAMUEL SHAPIRO

SEBASTIÁN LARRAIN—MAGNUM



There are two [Latin] Americas: the visible and the invisible. The visible [Latin] America . . . of presidents and embassies, expresses itself through official organs, through a controlled press. This America takes its seat at the conference table of the Pan American Union and has many votes in the United Nations. And there is the mute, repressed America, which is a vast reservoir of revolution . . . Nobody knows exactly what these 150,000,000 silent men and women think, feel, dream, or await in the depths of their being.

Germán Arciniegas, THE STATE OF LATIN AMERICA (1952)

As every newspaper editor knows, a local wedding or a mad dog loose on Main Street is a "better" news story than an earthquake on the other side of the world. Wars and revolutions may be noted; the ordinary facts of life in another country do not appear in print at all. In Detroit, for example, where I am a new resident, detailed descriptions of the 1961 automobiles have occupied the front pages for weeks, but, as I write, the recent elections in Brazil and the suppression of rebellions in Paraguay, Guatemala and Nicaragua are hardly considered worth mentioning. Newspaper editors and television and radio broadcasters are under such pressure to cover events of every kind all over the world that the quiet crumbling away of Latin American economies is deemed of little news value. There is really nothing very dramatic about the slow wasting effects of hunger and disease, even if the afflicted number in millions. As a result, the plight of Latin America's lower classes, millions of people living in bitter and growing poverty, never impinges upon the average American consciousness or conscience at all; that continental mass is simply "invisible."

Our knowledge of affairs in the nations to the south of us is not merely incomplete—it has been positively falsified. The same glamorizing process that has been successful in making movie stars and selling deodorants has created the image of a pleasant, idealized Latin America. The view of that area presented in American newspapers and magazines has until very recently been one of steady, substantial material progress, superimposed upon a background of picturesque scenery and operatic Hispanic charm. Much has been made of the ending of dictatorships in half a dozen countries during the past ten years and the coming to power of liberal statesmen like José Figueres, Romulo

Betancourt, and Lleras Camargo. We see and read a great deal about impressive plans for industrialization and diversification and inter-American economic assistance. The glowing standard for this view of contemporary Latin America is the much-publicized new capital of Brasília, its gleaming modernistic buildings springing from the red dirt of the Goiás plateau. Excepting a few "trouble spots" like the Dominican Republic and Fidel Castro's Cuba, inter-American relations seem amiable, and the Foreign Ministers' conferences at San José and Bogotá a few months ago were reported in the American press as having brought about a harmonious agreement as to future economic and political cooperation in this hemisphere.

Tourists, journalists, and government agencies in both Latin America and the United States have embellished this idyllic, if dim, picture of a progressive and prosperous continent to the south of us. Comparatively few Americans ever visit South America; most of those who do rarely see much besides the luxury hotels, restaurants, shopping centers, and scenic beauty spots designed to please and cater to them. Some resident diplomats and newspapermen know the situation better, but they are restrained from telling the truth by politeness and political necessity. Latin American officials and journalists themselves have been too proud (and too anxious to encourage tourism) to draw attention to the bitter poverty to be found in their countries' rural backwaters and sprawling urban slums. The result has been a tacit agreement to pass over in silence the awkward facts about the "mute, repressed America" of which Professor Arciniegas speaks.

This unwillingness to face an unpleasant reality was much in evidence during President Eisenhower's visit to four South American nations last March. Avoiding the countries where Vice President Nixon was spat upon and stoned two years before, Mr. Eisenhower went on a sanitary tour designed to keep him from seeing or hearing anything disagreeable. After a stop at the still-empty and echoing city of Brasília, Ike was taken on to Rio, where the pre-carnival atmosphere could be relied upon to cover any popular anger at rocketing prices and food shortages (the favorite carnival song was "Give Us Some Dough, Ike"). Leaving Brazil, the Pres-

ident was whisked into and out of Buenos Aires before he could see or be seen by Argentine workers whose leaders are held in jail without trial and whose standard of living has fallen sharply in the past two years. He spent the remainder of his brief stay at Mar del Plata, Argentina's Miami Beach, and on the golf links at the lovely resort town of Bariloche in the foothills of the Andes. During the rest of his trip an angry open letter by a group of Chilean students was blandly brushed aside, and the use of tear gas by local police against anti-American demonstrators in Montevideo played down. The President transacted no business, saw no labor leaders, student groups, or opposition politicians; yet his visit was widely proclaimed in the American press as a triumph of personal diplomacy, and the President came back visibly glowing at the "wonderful warm-hearted reception."

In actual fact, all the countries Ike visited, and most of the others in Latin America as well, are slipping toward catastrophe. Hidden away behind the facade of spectacular new buildings is a continent sunk in hunger and misery, the only major area in the world where productivity and living standards have not risen at all in the years since World War II. A few statistics are sufficient to expose the myth of prosperity:

—In Brazil, prices rose four to five per cent a month all last year; the *cruzeiro* fell from 60 to the dollar in 1957 to over 200 to the dollar this year, and the minimum wage has just been increased to \$50 a month.

—The average daily diet in Peru contains 1,900 calories.

—Consumption of beef, a staple food in the Argentine diet, fell from over 200 pounds a year in the early 1950's to less than 130 pounds last year.

—In 1957, a fairly prosperous year, one Cuban out of four was unemployed.

—It costs the Bolivian government mining monopoly \$1.60 to produce a pound of tin, the country's principal export commodity; the current world price is about \$1.00 a pound. The *boliviano* is currently worth less than one one-hundredth of a cent.

—The total net growth of the Latin American economy as a whole last year was about one-half of one per cent.

These statistics represent great and growing human misery. In highland Peru last year I talked to Indian peasants who were more degraded than their ancestors had been under the intelligent despotism of the Inca. Squeezing their

subsistence from small patches of sharply sloping land, barefoot, hungry, living in unheated huts with dirt floors, these Andean farmers could entertain no rational hope for better lives. Americans who have seen the fine film "Black Orpheus" got a glimpse of the *favelas*, the wretched shanty towns that cling to the ragged sides of Rio de Janeiro's beautiful green mountains; but, art aside, these picturesque shacks have no running water or toilets, and the people who must live in them are chronically hungry and diseased. In the sugar-cane fields of northern Argentina, I met migrant Indians who are paid sixty-two cents a day and who suck on sugar cane to still their gnawing hunger. Venezuela, with its immense oil reserves, has the highest per capita income in Latin America. But none of the oil profits have "trickled down" to the people who live in the dreadful slums on the outskirts of Caracas. Even Argentina, long an example of Latin American progress and prosperity, has suffered for years from a stationary or declining Gross National Product, chronic deficits despite a budget that takes thirty per cent of the national income, a growing foreign debt, and—incredibly—shortages of beef and wheat!

The causes of this continental decline ought to make quite as interesting reading as the happy fraction of the truth we have been receiving, for they are far tougher grist for the mind. They are so many and run so deep that economic improvement in Latin America will be slow and difficult if it is possible at all.

Despite the golden dreams that have beguiled investors for centuries, Latin America is not a very rich area geographically. Northern Mexico, the section most familiar to American tourists, is a stony desert; only ten per cent of the country as a whole is arable. Great sections of South America's west coast are utterly arid and quite uninhabitable, the driest deserts in the world. Large stretches of the continent are taken up by the Andes, which are far higher than the Rockies and immensely difficult to penetrate. The Amazon basin, an inviting green mass on a map, is all but deserted and will remain so until we develop new systems of tropical agriculture. Despite ambitious plans by President Kubitschek, the back country of Brazil remains empty: Brasília is, in fact, an almost desperate effort

to populate it and that effort has not yet shown any sign of success. No South American nation has the kind of coal and iron ore deposits that would enable it to establish the heavy industry on which prosperity in the United States, Western Europe, and the Soviet Union is based.

It is also true that Latin America is sapped by its division into national states too small to function effectively as economic units. Each nation strives, foolishly, for self-sufficiency; and the result is poverty for all. Customs regulations are complex and administered with infuriating inefficiency. It cost me \$3.80 and an entire working day to get a small box of microfilm from the United States into Buenos Aires; while I waited, I saw shipments of fruit to Brazil rotting on the docks for want of an export permit, and cargoes of automobiles and machinery that had been rusting away for months. Customs unions in Central and South America have been proposed ever since the wars of independence against Spain, but so far nothing but talk has resulted. One reason for the famous lack of cooperation among Latin Americans is the festering memory of ancient rivalries and border disputes. The current Argentine-Chilean squabble over a few Atlantic islands, Bolivian and Paraguayan memories of the bitter Chaco war of the 1930's, the rivalry between Brazil and Argentina for hegemony over Paraguay, the perpetual brush-fire wars, invasions, and revolutions all around the Caribbean—all create a climate of fear and suspicion that makes economic cooperation impossible.

These rivalries, generally over territories of little intrinsic importance, serve as an excuse for the outrageous proliferation of arms and armies in nations far too poor to afford either. No major Latin American nation has fought a war in this century. There is no prospect of one in the foreseeable future, and aggression by an extra-hemispheric power is even less likely. Nevertheless, every nation excepting Costa Rica and Uruguay maintains an expensive standing army, which takes from 25 per cent of the budget (in Peru, Chile, and Argentina) to over 50 per cent (in Paraguay). Brazil, with a deficit this year of 40 billion *cruzeiros*, and a critical shortage of roads, schools, teachers, and hospitals for its rapidly growing population, spends 30 per cent of its budget on a useless army,

and last April gave its generals and admirals a 100 per cent pay increase. Argentina has 10,000 officers on active duty, 20,000 more retired at full pay, and as many generals as the United States. Even little El Salvador has *sixteen generals*. Over all, a burdensome expenditure of more than \$2 billion a year buys nothing but impressive officers' clubs, ridiculous navies, and splendid uniforms. Yet when Argentina's President Frondizi, forced to impose an austerity program on the rest of the nation, murmured for reduction in the military budget, he was imperiously told that the Argentine army could not afford to discharge a single soldier. Venezuela's Betancourt similarly finds his plans for social reform hampered by the fact that he dare not cut his country's swollen military budget.

An even greater hindrance to economic progress is the social structure of Latin America, inherited from Spain and rather richly embroidered in some countries by racial antipathies. Between the well-to-do and the great masses of the poor there is in most countries only a very small and powerless middle class. In Mexico, for example, 100,000 well-to-do individuals at the top of the social pyramid receive 36 billion *pesos* in income; at the bottom, 10 million workers and peasants receive only 28 billion *pesos* (less than \$300 apiece). It is still possible in most countries to hire a maid for \$10 a month and board. In highland Peru and Bolivia, in the Amazon basin, in the hill country of Ecuador, Mexico, Haiti, Argentina, and Venezuela, millions of people live outside the money economy altogether. The difficulty of bringing change to these regions must be experienced to be appreciated: one group of experts spent weeks trying to teach a village of Indians to boil their drinking water—vainly. On a sugar plantation I visited in the Argentine province of Salta, not a single Indian, out of a working force of nearly three thousand, was able to read or write. "The law is obeyed, but not carried out"; when I asked an overseer why there were no schools on the plantation, he smiled and told me that "these *peones* can cut cane just as well without being able to read." In Mexico two people out of five are still illiterate; a few years ago President Ruiz Cortines had to admit that the Revolution had brought few benefits to the "enormous masses who still suffer in ignorance,



CORNELL CAPA-MAGNUM

enduring poverty and unhealthful conditions."

As the example of Spain itself shows, the Hispanic attitude toward life positively militates against material progress. Even educated Latin Americans seem to lack the drive required to build a modern industrial civilization. My friends in Peru were incredulous when I assured them that Nelson Rockefeller's motive in running for office was not related to his private fortune: "You mean he has all that money, and doesn't really *have* to work?" Few businessmen in Argentina or Chile drive themselves in the manner of a nineteenth-century American industrialist or a contemporary Organization Man. The ideal is to accumulate a fortune large enough to live on, preferably in farm land or urban real estate that can be handled by a manager; the aim of life is the intelligent enjoyment of leisure. Some of my own Yankee enthusiasm for working was blunted in South America, where one soon learns to adjust to and enjoy an easier tempo. There is indeed much to be said for the cultural values of friendship, the contemplative life, and "sweetly doing nothing." But the habit of looking on work as debasing must be considered a handicap to the forming of a society that would provide some leisure for everybody and not just for a few.

For the Latin American middle and upper classes, life has always been easy and servants cheap; it is hard to sell washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and other labor-saving devices in countries where servants will do all the chores for a few dollars a month.

Even the most energetic Latin American businessman is faced with bafflements that are likely to blunt his enthusiasm and lessen his chances of success. Argentine employers I talked to complained of the difficulty of getting skilled and willing workers. Those they trained themselves were generally resentful of their status as wage-earners, and under the control of a politicized labor union. They worked with a vexing lack of energy and efficiency, and when they went on one of their frequent strikes, terrorism and bombs were not unusual.

The elaborate network of transportation and communication that is taken for granted in advanced industrial countries simply does not exist in South America; a bitter strike of sugar workers in Argentina last year was prolonged for a number of days because the President of a province was *unable to reach the authorities in Buenos Aires by telephone*. Millions of man-hours are wasted by slow and cumbersome bank, postal, and delivery procedures; as a visiting

Yankee, I soon enough learned to shrug, smile, and agree with the maxim "Patience, and the grass will become milk." Throughout Latin America roads are bad, automobiles ancient, and a railroad journey of any length generally an ordeal of dirt, discomfort, and delay. Even airplane service is unsatisfactory. On half a dozen flights within Argentina, for example, I was delayed anywhere from six to thirty hours, and my English-speaking Argentine friends laughingly quoted another maxim: "If you have time to spare, go by air."

Economic growth is bound to be severely undercut, of course, if honest and stable government is lacking. Experience shows that a modern industrial state can be brought into being under a system of parliamentary democracy or under the forced draft of a dictatorship. But an intricate web of economic relationships cannot be built up under governments that change every few years, waste enormous amounts in unproductive expenditures, and damage their economies by inefficiency, inflation, and graft on a gigantic scale. The postwar dictatorships in Latin America came into power when high prices for sugar, beef, oil, and coffee had filled national treasuries. They stole and squandered staggering amounts. In Cuba alone, in seven years, Fulgencio Batista and his henchmen made away with about one billion dollars, and this amount is small compared to the sums taken by the dictators who looted wealthier Argentina and Venezuela. What they did not steal they wasted; Latin America is littered with the costly marble mementos of Odría, Perón, Pérez Jiménez, and the rest—Machado's \$18 million capitol in Havana peering across to a \$50 million University City in the Argentine Andes to which not a single student has ever been admitted. Democratic regimes are sometimes the worst. Kubitschek's Brasília has cost half a billion dollars in construction alone, while the *cruzeiro* plummeted to less than half a cent and hunger stalked the neglected northeast coast, where per capita income is less than \$100 per year.

Since the ending of the Korean War, the inflated commodity prices that fed these white elephants have collapsed, leaving Latin America's one-crop economies deeply depressed. Copper, for example, fell from 44 cents a pound in 1955 to 25 cents in 1958; sugar dropped fifty

per cent in price between 1954 and 1959. Brazilian coffee exports rose from 11 million sacks in 1954 to 17.5 million sacks last year, but price declines during the same period cut her income from \$948 million to \$750 million. The average North American is simply not aware of the economic disaster that these figures represent for his neighbors to the south. Since foreign trade is an economic necessity for these nations, the collapse of commodity prices virtually halted economic growth. The increase in gross national product last year was only one-fifth as great as the area's rapid rate of population increase (2.7 per cent a year, as compared to an average of 1.6 per cent for the rest of the world). Should existing trends continue—there is no reason why they should not—the area's present population of 190 million will increase to 300 million in 1975. I visited a number of rural areas in Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, and Argentina where the population is already living at and below the level of subsistence.

The forebodings of Malthus are reality in such places; there is no place for the younger men to go but among the unemployed in La Paz, Lima, Mexico City, and Buenos Aires. Lima alone has doubled in population over the past twelve years, not because of normal economic growth, but because it is an uneasy resting place for Indians spilling down from the mountain villages.

It is human—if not great wisdom—to blame our own difficulties on the wickedness of others; there is a strong and growing tendency among Latin American intellectuals to think of the United States as the author of all their troubles. It is certainly true that American policy during the last few years has been short-sighted and mistaken. Mining companies, sheep and cattle ranchers, fishing interests—every group of raw material producers within this country, no matter how small, has been able to get what it wanted in the way of trade legislation, no matter how damaging these restrictions might be to entire nations south of the Rio Grande. Increased tariffs on fish, wool, copper, and linseed oil, tight import quotas on lead, zinc, crude oil, and long-staple cotton, our refusal to join commodity stabilization plans, our dumping of wheat, corn, and cotton, our policy of not making loans for government development programs,

have injured the economies of a dozen countries, while harming the American consumer and benefiting only small special interest groups in this country.

The disastrous policy of giving arms, medals, and moral support to Latin American and Iberian dictators has severely compromised our honor throughout the area—and has not even been successful in keeping these self-proclaimed “anti-Communists” in power. Even today, despite the President’s bland statement to the Chilean students that “no nation loves liberty more,” we continue to show special favor to dictatorial regimes like those of Stroessner in Paraguay, Ydigoras Fuentes in Guatemala, and the Somoza clan in Nicaragua—as our prompt dispatch of naval units to the Caribbean in November, at the latter’s request, proves.

A favorite dogma of the late John Foster Dulles was that American capital investment could serve as a spur to economic development in Latin America and stimulate the growth needed to raise living standards. The available evidence suggests that this just isn’t so. Over \$7 billion in American money was invested in Brazil, Cuba, and Venezuela, but the average citizen of those countries is as ragged and hungry as he ever was—and if this is not quite the case in Cuba, it is not because of the planning behind our investments. The contrast is painful between the solid buildings of American-owned sugar plantations, copper mines, cattle ranches, and slaughterhouses, and the wretched shacks of the people who work inside them.

American companies are, quite understandably, in business to make a profit. They are more interested in their balance sheets than in the prosperity of the countries in which they operate, and they were naturally led to cooperate with dictatorships, that being the only viable way to do business. But since much of their expansion has been financed out of profits, with the surplus sent to the US as interest or dividends, many Latin American countries are therefore exporting capital to the US. [See “Nonsense and Foreign Aid,” on page 31—*Editor*.] An altogether gratuitous affront, particularly in Cuba, Panama, and Mexico, is the Jim Crow code of American businessmen and government officials; the natives of these countries will tell you they have often been made to feel like second-class

citizens in their own homeland. The *Yanquis*—so it seems to many Latin Americans—don’t care if their “Good Neighbors” die of disease or starve to death so long as they do it quietly, without interfering with American investments or calling on the Soviet *bloc* for assistance. When they do rebel against poverty and dictatorship, the answer is hostility, economic and diplomatic pressure, and the use of force—most recently in Guatemala in 1954.

It is against the background of this grave, deepening, and continent-wide slippage that the true significance of the Cuban revolution can be seen. Whatever we may think of Castro’s impulsiveness and reckless reliance on Soviet economic and military support, it is certainly true that he has brought immediate and substantial benefits to the Cuban peasant. As Theodore Draper put it, in an article otherwise critical of the Cuban revolutionary government:

There is no getting around the fact that for the poor, illiterate, landless, outcast *guajiros*, the cooperatives represent a jump of centuries in living standards. They also represent a vast increase of constructive activity in the rural areas that were formerly the most backward and stagnant part of Cuba. (*The Reporter*, May 12, 1960)

On a visit to a number of cooperatives this July, I was able to verify this impressive and incontrovertible increase in the standard of living in rural Cuba. Cuban farmers today, for the first time in their lives, are getting shoes, milk, meat, proper medical care, and even electric lights, running water, and refrigerators. These accessions, acquired by youth, energy, personal bravery, and *charisma*, have made Fidel Castro a hero to the common man everywhere in Latin America. When the Cuban film “El Gran Fidel” was shown in Buenos Aires last year, it was greeted with roars of applause from Argentines who saw in Castro the champion of their own aspirations. I met nearly a dozen visitors to Cuba from Ecuador, Peru, and other South American countries this summer, and all of them were favorably impressed by what they saw out in the countryside. “If this is Communism,” a friend of mine from Córdoba remarked, “we need a lot more of it back in Argentina.” The goodwill tour of Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticós, which went almost unmentioned in American newspapers, was in ominous contrast to the

much-publicized Eisenhower visit. Although snubbed by conservative heads of government, Dorticós drew large crowds and won enthusiastic support from students, labor union leaders, and left-wing politicians. The State Department, duplicating Castro's own ineptness in foreign relations, has temporarily managed to isolate Cuba from the other American republics by promises of loans to them and by altering our thirty-year-old policy of support for Generalissimo Trujillo. It remains to be seen how much our promises are really worth, and how much of the \$500 million we are to loan to Latin America will really go into economic development, how much into graft, and how much into profits for American businessmen. (ICA records are still partially secret, but spokesmen have admitted to corruption and mismanagement in several large Point Four projects, particularly in Haiti and Bolivia.) If no basic changes occur in Latin America's economic and social structure, of course, our aid will have no more effect than a lavish handout to an alcoholic beggar.

In sum, and looked at in deeper perspective, our victories over Castroism at recent meetings of the Organization of American States seem meaningless. We do have the support of conservative statesmen, army officers, and government officials, and we have always had the friendship and gratitude of Latin American dictators; but we have to a shocking extent lost the confidence of the young men who are rising to power all over South America (and in Africa and Asia as well). Unlike the American undergraduates with whom we are all familiar, the students to whom I lectured in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro, and Lima know in their own persons what poverty and frustration are. USIS propaganda films that stupidly display the glossy surface of American life are openly hooted; their contrast to the squalor in which so many students themselves live is humiliating, and derision is the only manly response. And Latin Americans, despite our almost neurotic iteration of propaganda to them about Soviet crimes in Hungary, are far more interested in recent events in the United States—our continued shipments of arms to both democratic and dictatorial governments, our failure to integrate southern schools, the anti-Catholic campaign against Sen-

ator Kennedy, and Senator Eastland's remark this September that he wished "there were a Trujillo in every country in Central and South America." For the products of our culture most familiar in Latin America—comic books, filmed television shows, westerns, cigarettes, and hair oil—many young Argentines and Brazilians have nothing but contempt. What their countries need, they feel, is financial help and technical assistance, and in recent years they have had little of either from the USA. A poll of several hundred Chilean university students taken last year found that only one out of four favored siding with the West in the cold war, one out of seven favored the Sino-Soviet bloc, and the overwhelming majority were neutralist.

The countries to the south of us are, in short, being swept by the same "revolution of rising expectations" that is in evidence in all the other underdeveloped areas of the world. Over the course of the next decade the hitherto invisible mass will find its leaders and simply try to heave itself into prominence. If our government continues to fight against change, and to prop up any government in power, no matter how corrupt or dictatorial, our future relations with Latin America will be as troubled as those with Fidel Castro's Cuba today. We have worked according to what might be called the "fire-alarm" system, in Latin America as elsewhere, under which we ignore any situation until it actually erupts into catastrophe. That kind of foreign policy did not work badly during the nineteenth century, when our geographic isolation and the *Pax Britannica* kept us from harm despite our generally inept diplomacy. We were given time to recover from our isolationist illusions in 1914-1917 and in the 1930's, although the cost was staggering. But if we wait any longer to admit and attempt to alter the deterioration in Latin America, it may be too late.



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ALBERT CAMUS, MILITANT

by JUSTIN O'BRIEN

On the anniversary of Camus' death,
a friend and translator and eminent scholar of
French letters recalls the man whose art and
journalism combined to affect the age.

Perhaps the rapid, sweeping fame of Albert Camus was a compensation granted him by fate, which knew in advance, of course, that he was to have but forty-six years of life. If his career was to be complete and his renown universal, everything had to move swiftly, and the world had to accept him at once. His tragic death in an automobile accident on 4 January 1960 at the height of his creative life fits the growing legend of the man who once said: "I have too much youth in me to be able to speak of death." And yet, throughout his work he constantly returned to the contemplation of death; he was a death-haunted man.

The agents of fate who speeded Camus' worldwide reputation were legion: friends and publishers, translators from Norway and Finland to Yugoslavia and Portugal, from Poland to Japan. Most likely, he couldn't even have pronounced most of their names properly. Now that Camus is dead and his second posthumous work is to be published in America in my translation, I am urged to look upon myself as one of those myriad agents—a minor one because I didn't begin to translate his work until four of his books were available in English. But having frequented Albert Camus in all sorts of circumstances—on a lecture platform during his first visit to this country; in a speeding jeep crossing Paris, with André Gide in flowing cape

on the front seat turning round to talk to us perched behind him; at a lunchtable in Paris where the late American novelist Richard Wright was his other guest; in his office as an editor of the Gallimard publishing house; on a Parisian stage where he was rehearsing a cast of actors in *Caligula*—I early succumbed to the warmth, simplicity, and straightforward charm of the man who has been snatched from us. In his person as in his writings, he established at once a fraternal relationship with those he was addressing and no one could remain impervious to his boyish smile.

That smile is uppermost in my memory, which now sees Camus most frequently as a young visitor to our shores, quite simple and unaffected, leaning on the mantelpiece at Columbia's Maison Française, or in my apartment in Greenwich Village with a cigarette in his hand, answering questions thrown at him by a group of eager-eyed students sitting at his feet. Like an astute politician, he was ever particularly interested in youth, for he knew that the future lay in them. Besides—despite the weight of his experience, so different from any we had known—he seemed so young himself.

But my first personal contact with Albert Camus, even before seeing him in such intimate surroundings, took place in March 1946, very shortly before Knopf published the first Camus

book here. I say "personal contact" because as an American officer in Paris in October 1944, I had first heard of the young novelist-dramatist-philosopher of whom all Paris was talking. His books were already *épuisés* and *introuvables* but, knowing that the Gallimard firm always kept a certain stock in the cellar, I managed to come home with copies. Then, in early 1946, almost simultaneous announcements spoke of *The Stranger* to appear here and of Camus' first visit to America.

No American Francophile could remember any lecture in French that had ever drawn an audience of more than three hundred in New York. Yet, on the evening of 28 March 1946, we were to be at least four times that many in the huge auditorium at Columbia University known as McMillin Theater. To be sure, it was the first such manifestation, as the French say, since the war, and the three lecturers were named Vercors, Thimerais, Albert Camus.

The Silence of the Sea, published here by Pantheon in French and in English, and variously attributed to all the great French writers from whom we had felt so dreadfully cut off for four years, had established overnight the reputation of the pseudonym "Vercors." "Thimerais" remained unknown, for the *Editions de Minuit*, which had clandestinely published and circulated in 1943 his moving essay entitled *La Pensée patiente*, had not yet reached us.

But many already knew that Albert Camus, at the age of thirty, had brought out a novel (*The Stranger*) that was greatly admired in France, an essay with a very strange title, and two plays. A few Americans in uniform had come back with copies of the newspaper *Combat*, of which Camus was said to be one of the founders.

This was about all that New Yorkers knew about the three young Frenchmen who were to speak on the 28th of March. But everyone was eager to hear French spoken again and to see in flesh and blood some survivors of the black years of the Occupation. M. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Cultural Counsellor of the French Embassy at the time, had the idea of holding the meeting under the patronage of an inter-university committee, and, inasmuch as I had just shed my uniform to resume duties as an associate pro-

fessor of French at Columbia, he named me chairman of the committee.

Consequently, Vercors, Thimerais (whose real name, Léon Motchane, is better known among physicists and mathematicians than among literary people), and I picked up Albert Camus in midtown to arrange for the symposium. It was already announced as "The Crisis of Mankind" and the title must certainly have been Camus'. The day before the big show at Columbia, the four of us went up to Camus' room in one of those mothy hotels on upper Broadway. I shall never forget the utter simplicity and the smile, reminiscent of a Paris street-urchin, that distinguished the youngest among us, nor the admiring glance cast at him by an attractive girl in the elevator. The moment we were in his room and the athletic young man had stretched out on the bed with a few notes in front of him, he easily dominated the group.

And the following evening, however eloquently the two others spoke, Camus easily dominated the debate. Making no distinctions between victors and vanquished in the war, he rapidly sketched a horribly debased conception of man that was, he said, the legacy of World War II. Had not *all* of mankind, forgetting ancient ideals, descended to the very vilest means in its intramural strife? But with his conviction, and with his unassuming, youthful manner, the moment he launched into his unflattering subject—which permitted examples drawn from Algiers, Auschwitz, the streets of Paris and Madrid—it became apparent that he was in fact defending human dignity and asking justice for all. When he told us that, as human beings of the twentieth century, we were all of us responsible for the war, and even for the horrors we had just been fighting (the concentration camps, extermination by gas), all of us in the huge hall were convinced, I think, of our common culpability. Then Camus—who was never one to castigate without embodying an affirmative suggestion in his sermon—told us how we could contribute, even in the humblest way, to re-establishing the honesty and dignity of men.

Just then, one of our students passed up to the stage a note saying that thieves had stolen the receipts, intended for war-orphans in France. After Camus' moving remarks, I could do nothing but announce that the "Crisis of Mankind"

was at the door and that our charitable endeavor would be of no benefit to French orphans. Fortunately, a man of good will rose in the middle of the audience and proposed that on the way out everyone pay his entrance-fee a second time. At once the two girls from whom the little black box had been stolen rushed out to the lobby and set up their box-office again.

No one was surprised to learn the next day that the second "take," the only one left, amounted to far more than the first one. After all, Camus had spoken meanwhile and everyone had left under the spell of his persuasive words. One of the other speakers, back in Paris, told the story to the *Figaro*, which published a half-column about it—all to the glory of America, the land of gangsters and of generous hearts.

And it is quite appropriate that Albert Camus should have first addressed his American public, or what was to become his American public, on such a subject. He was at the time still editor-in-chief of *Combat*, which had introduced a new purity and vigor into French journalism. In one of his early editorials he had opposed humanity to mediocrity as if it were quite natural to define mankind by what is not mediocre. And in all of his editorials he had militantly defended the dignity of man and man's aptitude for greatness. "The Camus of *Combat*," writes Etienne, "showed that a journalist can distinguish himself by character while distinguishing the language, making of an editorial or of the humblest article a work of art."

One of the best photographs of Camus shows him standing at the imposing stone in the printing plant of a newspaper. With a pencil in his right hand and the ever-present cigarette in his left, he is correcting one of his editorials while an attentive printer stands beside him ready to run off another proof. Camus looks confident and happy, although working under pressure. Did he not say in the last year of his life that there were two places where he had been supremely happy? One was on stage either acting or directing a company of actors and the other was a newspaper composing-room. In both places he belonged to a team working in harmonious effort toward the realization of a specific aim. And in both situations he was likely to be the moving spirit.

Unfortunately, Camus the journalist and polemicist is still inadequately known in America. And yet, throughout his too-short and most active life, he never abandoned the journalism that had been his introduction to writing. In Algiers in 1938, at the age of twenty-five, he had joined the staff of *Alger-Républicain*, and the following year his forthright reportage on the misery of the Kabyle tribes of Algeria had caused a sensation and incurred the wrath of the government. He was even then working on his play *Caligula* and already planning his first novel, *L'Etranger*. Unable to find work in Algiers because of the official distrust of him, he had gone to Paris, early in the Occupation years, to work for *Paris-Soir*, one of the biggest dailies. Now beyond doubt a professional journalist, he may even then have dreamt of one day having his own newspaper marked with his personal stamp. The opportunity came after he joined the powerful resistance movement known as "Combat" in 1942 and helped found the clandestine newspaper of the same name, of which he became editor-in-chief. Despite his postwar position as an editor in the Gallimard publishing house, despite his growing fame from the publication of *L'Etranger* and *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* and the staging of his plays, *Le Malentendu* and *Caligula*, he continued to edit *Combat* until 1947. There it was that he could exert his most direct influence. As one of his young associates, Roger Grenier, wrote of that period: "The whole administrative staff of the newspaper, the whole team of printers, all those who approached him, even if they had not read his books and were far removed from the world of books, realized fully who Camus was and were comforted and enriched by contact with him."

For several years after 1947, Camus held no regular position in journalism—partly because of uncertain health and partly because his income was then assured by his position with Gallimard and by the royalties from his growing shelf of books and plays. Yet he continued, through occasional articles and speeches, to take a stand in those causes that were dear to him. Then in the autumn of 1955, when the weekly *Express*, for which he had frequently written, became a daily with the impressive collaboration of such as François Mauriac, Pierre

Mendès-France, and François Mitterand, he returned to regular journalism, contributing to *L'Express* at least two articles a week. It was then that his statements on the North African problem reached the widest possible public. After *L'Express* again became a weekly, Camus tended to avoid journalistic commitments that would tie him down to frequent deadlines. Still, his name continued to appear irregularly among the by-lines of numerous Parisian weeklies. Until his death in January 1960, Camus was never completely divorced from the career he had begun in Algiers as a youth.

By setting an example of lucidity and courage in facing and answering the questions that torment us, Albert Camus did leave behind a model of superior journalism. Whether read in the newspapers for which he wrote them or in the three volumes in which he collected them under the modest title of *Actuelles* (1950, 1953, and 1958), his articles gave the postwar generation the moral guidance it seemed to need. The very independence of mind that put him on the governmental black-list in 1939 allowed him to attack simultaneously Russian labor camps and American support of Franco. In facing squarely the anguishing problem of Algeria from 1938 to 1958 (one whole volume of *Actuelles* is properly devoted to this) he saw steadily, as only an Algerian Frenchman could, both the point of view of the Arabs and that of the more than a million French in Algeria. And his stirring series of articles on the Hungarian revolt of 1956, the most forthright to appear in France, allowed him to repeat and to document his memorable statement that "None of the evils that totalitarianism claims to remedy is worse than totalitarianism itself." The longest essay in the entire collection is the now famous "Reflections on the Guillotine," in which he vividly and convincingly marshals all the arguments for abolition of the death penalty. But even those pages, with their balanced appeals to reason, to sentiment, and to the senses, are no more moving than the brief evocation of his co-worker in the Resistance, the young poet René Leynaud, executed by the Germans for his patriotic activity.

"The era of chairbound artists is over," Camus once wrote. And, although he did not invent the

now-popular term *engagé*, he personified for our time the committed writer. He achieved in his personality as in his work a delicate equilibrium between commitment and aloofness, between the state of solidarity and the state of solitude. As he said in "The Artist and his Time:"

Even if, militants in our lives, we speak in our work of deserts and of selfish love, the mere fact that our lives are militant causes a special tone of voice to people with men that desert and that love. I shall certainly not choose the moment when we are beginning to leave nihilism behind to stupidly deny the values of creation in favor of the values of humanity, or vice versa. In my mind neither one is ever separated from the other and I measure the greatness of an artist (Molière, Tolstoy, Melville) by the balance he managed to maintain between the two. Today, under the pressure of events, we are obliged to transport that tension into our lives likewise. This is why so many artists, bending under the burden, take refuge in the ivory tower or, conversely, in the social church. But as for me, I see in both choices a like act of resignation. We must simultaneously serve suffering and beauty.

Obviously Camus' polemical and journalistic articles helped him maintain that personal equilibrium, without which his novels and plays would not be the consummate works of art they are. And yet, as he implies, the same tone of voice is in everything he wrote.

Indeed, the journalistic writings show once again, as does the first novel, that, from the start of his career, Albert Camus wrote with the assurance that belongs to maturity. And the Camus of *Actuelles* (for, despite having translated these pieces, I can see them and their title only in French) will always make me think of that evening in March 1946 when the young Pascal, or La Bruyère, or Voltaire stood up on the platform and told us off in our smugness and righteousness. It matters little by which of these names we call Camus, because he so obviously belongs among the moralists, with whom the French tradition abounds.



Justin O'Brien is chairman of the French department at Columbia University and has translated numerous works by André Gide and Albert Camus, including the forthcoming volume of Camus' essays entitled *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death* (Knopf) and the play *Caligula*.



THE LITTLE-READ SCHOOLHOUSE

The Videogogue and his Pedavision

by RICHARD FRANKO GOLDMAN

It is left to the reader to choose laughter, tears or the hills, as a sharp commentator views a thoroughly arresting new 'gimmick' in painless schooling. It has no wheels, a TV Guide, and flies.

In 1956, Washington County, Maryland, certified statistically to be an "average" American politico-economic unit, was selected as the site for a five-year experiment in educational television, sponsored and subsidized by the Electronics Industry Association (EIA) and The Fund for the Advancement of Education of the Ford Foundation. EIA provided the equipment to operate the project; and the Fund "has underwritten the cost of designing the system; assisting with production problems; training personnel for operating, adminis-

tering, and supervising the program; and developing and carrying out the evaluation. The Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company of Maryland, with the technical advice of the Bell Laboratories, has developed the system of closed-circuit communication for transmitting telecasts to the classroom. They are using this experience to determine the rates for the closed-circuit cable rental."

It is estimated that as of the spring of 1960, some \$1,500,000 had been put into this "pilot project." On August 1, 1960, a further gift of \$776,000 was announced by the Ford Foundation, to be divided, in an unspecified way, between the Washington County Project and another experiment of similar nature.

The quotation above, and all those that follow, are taken from the *Progress Report* of the Washington County Closed-Circuit Educational Television Project, dated March 1959, and issued by the Board of Education, Hagerstown, Maryland. This fifty-page booklet belongs in every American home, preferably on the bookshelf between *1984* and *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

The *Report* is decorated with illustrations,

graphs, charts and statistics, all of the varieties of visual "presentation" which have so markedly become the staple of the "communications arts" and have so visibly undermined communication by language. It advances the arguments with which everyone must by now be familiar. It dwells on the anticipated advantages of television in the classroom, the possibilities of using superior teachers in all subjects, of employing "resource people" in special fields, of binding all students over a wide area into one happy and unified group, and of "enriching" the curriculum in a variety of ways.

We have heard this sort of thing so often from educators that it may be more interesting to pay attention to other portions of the *Report*, especially those having to do with the actual working of the project, and to supplement these statements with observations I was able to make during a visit to the Project in March 1960.

When the *Progress Report* was issued, televised instruction was transmitted to all but twelve of the county's forty-nine elementary and high schools. By the fall of 1959, the coverage was almost complete. Approximately 18,000 pupils, in grades 1 through 12, are now receiving varying amounts of instruction via television in a selected variety of subjects. According to the *Report*, "the total daily television experience" of any one pupil is in most cases less than one hour, exceptions being made for grades 7 and 8, which receive eighty minutes.

The telecasts to the classrooms throughout the county originate in a television center located in Hagerstown. This is a highly professional installation, with five fully-equipped studios, a film library, video-tape facilities, offices, and a shop for the "production of visuals." The staff of television or "studio" teachers (fourteen for the elementary grades; ten for high school) has its headquarters here. This staff is entirely separate from the classroom staff in the various schools, and *does no live teaching*. (The teachers for television were, however, originally selected from personnel already in the county system.) The production staff outnumbers the group who teach: "engineers," "production supervisors," "directors" and others number thirty-two, not counting two members of the staff who are listed simply as "Visual Aids."

The administrative staff includes a Director of

Instruction as well as a Supervisor of Instruction and a Coordinator. There is, of course, a Director of Public Relations.

Telecasts go out to the county schools on five channels. Thus five grades may receive instruction simultaneously in five subjects. A "survey" having reached the conclusion that there should be one television set for each twenty to twenty-five pupils, each classroom is equipped with two receivers. Most are standard twenty-one-inch models.

When the *Report* was issued, the following subjects were taught by television:

Grade	Subjects Taught
1	Reading and Number Experiences, Art, Music
2	Reading and Number Experiences, Art, Music
3	Reading and Number Experiences, Art, Music
4	Social Studies, Arithmetic, Art, Music
5	Social Studies, Arithmetic, Art, Music
6	Science, Arithmetic, Art, Music
7	Core, Mathematics, Science, Practical Arts
8	Core, Mathematics, Science, Practical Arts
9	General Science
10	Plane Geometry
11	US History
12	English ("General" and "Academic"), Physics (taught entirely by film)

The day-by-day content of these courses is described in a special school *TV Guide*, issued weekly and distributed to all pupils and teachers. This *Guide* is a replica of the familiar commercial *TV Guide*, and I shall refer later to some of its features and some of its uses. For the moment, some of the course descriptions may be of interest to those not familiar with the content of "Core" or "Social Studies." For example:

(Friday, April 1, 9:05 a.m.) Seventh Grade—CORE: "Afghanistan—Comma with Single Introductory Words." Afghanistan is important as a buffer state to keep strong countries apart and lessen the chance of trouble between them. Between what two strong countries is Afghanistan located? We shall find some more uses for the comma with short introductory words—sometimes introductory adverbs and sometimes with conjunctive adverbs.

This is a good specimen of "Core," which aims to soften up "dry" subjects, such as commas, with "enriching" material, such as Afghanistan; with the predictable result that the pupil

emerges with a general idea that the inhabitants of Afghanistan are known as Commas, and that adverbs are usually employed as buffers.

(Thursday, March 31, 1:00 p.m.) Fifth Grade—SOCIAL STUDIES:

"Visiting the Everglades National Park." The Everglades is one of the most exciting of the National parks. It is an area of swampland which stretches south from Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf of Mexico, a distance of about 100 miles. The chief attraction is the wildlife found in the Everglades.

Not listed above are the telecasts bearing the titles of "Enrichment," "Controlled Reading," "Basic Reading Skills," "Music for Pleasure" and "Guidance." Time is also scheduled for administrative announcements and for Film Previews, to be viewed by the teachers, but open also to students. The "Guidance" program is highly touted for "appropriate student groups." At the time of the *Report*,

guidance information programs . . . using the best available resource people as special guests . . . were offered in six areas: a personal problem series answered questions about dating, staying in school, health, and peer relationships; the curriculum choice series, *Plan Ahead*, aided students in selecting their subjects for the ensuing year; *College Days* served to help senior high school students weigh the advantages of specific colleges; *Careers for Tomorrow* enlightened teen-agers on the jobs in the world of tomorrow; while *It's Your Choice* informed senior boys about the advantages of the different branches of the armed services. The year's guidance telecast concluded with a program on *Orientation* for sixth grade pupils who were preparing to enter junior high school.

A guidance program is described as follows in the *TV Guide*:

(Tuesday, March 29, 12:35 p.m.) GUIDANCE:
"Careers for Tomorrow." Do you enjoy both books and people? If your answer is yes, you might wish to hear this telecast during which Miss . . . and Mr. . . . will discuss the work of a librarian.

With these additional "educational experiences," it is apparent that a given child may enjoy "a daily television experience" considerably in excess of eighty minutes.

It is true that much of this curriculum, with its "Practical Arts," its "Core," "Social Studies," "Number Experiences," "Guidance" and "Controlled [i.e., remedial] Readings" is also practiced without TV in schools all over the

United States. The issue is simply whether or not TV does it better or provides any reason to hope for significant change in the future.

TV instruction in Washington County does not eliminate the classroom teacher, although it substantially changes his or her function. At best, the classroom teacher becomes part of a "team" ("continuous working together and re-evaluation are necessary for the effective use of television"); at worst, he becomes a monitor with a teaching certificate, appointed to keep the children from playing marbles during lessons, or taking advantage in imaginable ways of the semi-darkness of the classroom while the TV set is performing.

The TV or "studio" teachers prepare their lessons well in advance. The argument is offered that by being relieved of classroom duties they have more time for "research," conferences, planning, constructing "visuals," and preparing "meaningful lessons." For each lesson, an outline is prepared; this outline is duplicated and a copy sent to each teacher who will be on the receiving end of the telecast. The classroom teacher is thus prepared for the TV lesson, and will have time to think about supplementary work and questions and answers in connection with it. The classroom teacher's first responsibility is, of course, to turn on the set at the proper time; about this, there is no option. After the lesson, the classroom teacher fills out a "feedback" card and returns it to the studio teacher. The classroom teacher is also encouraged to telephone comments to the studio. The "feedback" card is perhaps interesting enough to reproduce.

The TV teacher performs for invisible and inaudible pupils. He cannot see or hear their responses, alter his pace to fit a given situation, or enjoy the flashes of real communication provided by a live child's curiosity. These difficulties are recognized, but the counter-argument is advanced that the classroom teacher is available to answer questions, fill gaps, or perhaps simply to arouse interest and sustain morale. One might, however, consider the case of the music teacher on the TV screen asking the children to sing, and being unable to hear them. No one in Washington County seems to find anything odd about this.

The prepared outline in multigraphed form is so obviously a trap for the studio teacher that

School _____	Grade _____	Subject _____
Classroom Teacher _____	No. of Students _____	Lesson Date _____
Level of Student Ability: Above Average _____ Average _____ Below Average _____		
1. Sound: Distinct _____ Audible _____ Not Clear _____ Describe Difficulty _____		
2. Video: Clear _____ Interference _____ Describe Difficulty _____		
3. Introduction: Stimulating _____ All Right _____ Dull _____		
4. Development: Clear _____ Interesting _____ Weak _____		
5. Visuals: Enough _____ Too Many _____ Too Few _____		
Shown Long Enough _____ Not Long Enough _____ (Which One) _____		
Effective _____ Didn't Make the Point _____ (Which One) _____		
6. Speed of Lesson: Right _____ Too Fast _____ Too Slow _____		
7. Vocabulary: Right _____ Too Difficult _____ Too Easy _____		
8. Level of Lesson for Students: Too Difficult _____ Satisfactory _____ Too Elementary _____		
9. Amount of Student Participation During TV Lesson: Inadequate _____ Adequate _____ Too Much _____		
10. Summary: Effective _____ All Right _____ Omitted _____		
		T _____
11. Length of Telecast: Right _____ Too Long _____ Too Short _____		
		P _____
12. Amount of Student Participation After Telecast: Inadequate _____ Adequate _____		
		E _____
13. Student Interest: _____		
-USE OTHER SIDE FOR SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS-		

Feedback Card

one is struck by the apparent lack of resistance on the part of the teachers themselves. Aside from the restriction it imposes on imaginative teachers, the limitation of the range for digression or improvisation, the prepared script is subject not only to the approval of the group ("group-thinking" is of course much stressed), but also to the scrutiny of anyone in the community who appears to be interested. The history of "interest" in our public schools during recent years indicates with some clarity who these people are most likely to be. Will the American Legion allow the second grade music teacher to use a song about the Little Red Hen? I am not aware that this kind of "interest" has yet been demonstrated in Washington County, but I have no doubt at all that it will be eventually. Again, in conformity with the usage in most school systems, Washington County encourages active "togetherness" with the PTA. "Community members are able to share instructional experiences with their children by viewing the telecasts in their homes. In a closed-circuit system, television sets located in libraries, museums, hotels, and other community centers make it possible for citizens who might be reluctant

to visit classrooms, to view telecasts that they would not otherwise see."

The TV teacher is constantly watched—whether by Big Brother or Little Brethren would not seem to matter greatly. "Constructive" criticism, it is understood, must always be welcomed; but one knows pretty well what this can mean.

So far as *quality* is concerned, and the whole promise that TV can do the job better, I saw no evidence that the TV instruction was in any way superior to the general run of non-TV elementary school teaching one can find every day in any part of the US. I saw great evidence of "sincerity," and I saw nothing worse than usual. But the important thing is that I saw nothing *better*, for improvement in quality is the claim made for the whole business. My feeling is very strong that the teaching on TV *will not get better*; the ends, as usual, will be dictated by the means. Signs of this are visible: the teachers are very conscious of "visual aids" (gadgets), used occasionally with some effect, but more often in a completely unnecessary way, and never in an indispensable way. Second: the teacher is part of a "team" with directors, producers and technicians, whose "advice" or de-

cisions carry weight. Third: the medium itself makes it inevitable that a premium is put on *acting*. The comments I most frequently heard about a popular teacher on the TV staff were: "Oh, she's such a wonderful little actress!" "She uses her hands so well!" "Doesn't she have charm?" "A wonderful TV personality!"

To be blunt, it seems to me that the idea of having an average grade-school teacher brought simultaneously into forty-nine schools is horrifying. When one reads in one of the prepared outlines the following specimen of English—

Practice reading song with syllables. Is there anyone in your room who can read it in syllables all by themselves?

one can see the happy results of constant supervision, group-thinking and planning, and the intellectual influence of TV producers. "Why cannot each teacher be allowed to make their own mistakes?" is a motto one is tempted to propose.

Even assuming for the moment that any given TV system will eventually employ only "superior" teachers, one must ask what the standards are by which they will be so judged. And having been captured live, why should they not be videotaped while at their best, so that their classes may be telecast year after year? In practice, it is probable that for every superior TV teacher, there will be a dozen who are merely average, and there is the very real danger that there will be many poor teachers at the top of the heap because of their good looks, their charm, their "acting" techniques or their "projection." Everyone can remember at least one hokum artist from his undergraduate days, who was usually voted "most popular" professor, and whose classes were always jammed. An institution can afford one or two of these as comedy relief, but it hardly wants them to set the academic tone throughout the curriculum. But can one seriously doubt the temptations for all concerned with a TV curriculum?

Already noticeable are props, settings, styles and mannerisms directly borrowed or imitated from commercial TV. The *Report* itself unintentionally reveals the rationalizing process that is involved:

Can people learn from watching television? The answer seems obvious. Television provides home

viewers with important information; news events as they happen, discussion of world wide issues and problems; religious programs; dramas, sports, and many types of entertainment. All members can benefit from having accurate pictorial descriptions of people, places, events, things, and processes. Children identify themselves with television stars and imitate them as they play at being a Space Cadet, Zorro, the Lone Ranger, or an F.B.I. agent. Boys and girls who have not yet mastered reading or writing can recognize many words on the screen and associate them with objects, products, and people. They can recall the details of programs, songs, names, or commercials and build up a background of information which will help them in the future with reading and writing. Television in the home provides many opportunities for learning. The child's curiosity [*sic*] is aroused while he is being entertained. He asks questions about the programs, and receives glimpses of understanding and is not aware that learning is taking place. Processes are unconsciously initiated that will be used and developed in school later.

As a result, children have knowledge, information, and experiences that far exceed those of past generations. They know a great deal about important people, places and events. The fact that boys and girls now come to school with more enriched backgrounds requires changes in the content and procedures of teaching.

These two paragraphs are so wonderfully enriched as to constitute in themselves an almost complete commentary on the state of American education. But two sentences are specially to be noted: "The child's curiosity is aroused while he is being entertained."; and, "as a result children have knowledge, information and experiences that far exceed those of past generations." The fact that this "knowledge, information and experience" is at best illusory and second-hand is of course not mentioned; though to call it second-hand is to be charitable, just as to call it knowledge, information and experience in the first place is to commit the kind of propagandistic falsehood that is one of the basic stocks-in-trade of TV as a mass medium. The implications of this kind of double-talk are terrifying, but it would take a separate essay of some length to explore them. It may merely be suggested that when the average child's television viewing at home is equated with "knowledge, information and experience," we are quietly accepting that state of electronic imbecility which is already familiar in the popular equation of intellectual accomplishment and the win-

ning of quiz shows.

The paragraphs quoted above reveal the extent of the confusion—now so normal in the United States as to pass unnoticed—between education and entertainment. That TV will increase the confusion is hardly open to doubt. Again, the *Report* unwittingly indicates that this is to be considered a good thing: the curriculum via TV allows for “special features” and the use of “resource people” from the “community, state and nation” so that “the actions and drama of community and world events can be brought into the classroom . . .” The curriculum may easily become a variety show of interviews with “celebrities,” trips to Coney Island, high school band concerts and beauty contests, all “educational experiences” no doubt, providing rich and fruitful opportunities for “evaluating the learnings that have occurred.” I am not joking about this; during my visit to Hagerstown, a seventh grade arithmetic class was abbreviated so that I could be interviewed (perhaps exhibited would be the better word) as a “distinguished” visitor. I am under no illusions about the value of this exhibition to the students of the seventh grade; perhaps some of them were glad that the arithmetic lesson was shortened; I do not know what “learnings occurred.” And it is obvious that the definition of “distinguished” as applied to visitors is an elastic one that will eventually include, if it does not already, local aldermen, the winners of golf tournaments, Miss Rheingold, small-time TV comedians or newscasters, and a variety of other “personalities” in the “news” or anxious to get there.

One can ask seriously how long it will be before the teachers themselves, knowingly or not, willingly or unwillingly, become part of a great package deal. When will that popular teacher who “uses her hands so well” confide to the children that she uses such-and-such a nail polish, or has her hair done at so-and-so’s on Main Street? The TV people will tell you that this cannot happen; there will be no commercial influence in the schools. The Washington County *Report* states flatly about its *TV Guide*: “It is the same size and style as the commercial *TV Guide*, and has a two-color cover and no advertisements.” The issue for the school week March 26-April 1, 1960, which is on my desk, does not have a two-color cover, but it does contain five

commercial advertisements, including the back cover. (The front cover carries a photo of one of the teachers, which is also not insignificant.) Can one feel that there is anything preposterous about the prospect of some day hearing that the children’s sixth grade science lesson comes to them courtesy of a local brewery? Or the cheery voice beginning the lesson with: “Children, don’t forget to tell Mommy about the Super Sale of spinach at the A&P!” How easy to tie this in with a little “number experience”: two pounds of spinach for 17¢ is how much of a saving over one pound of spinach at 10¢?

The stake of the community is apparently being made more explicit each year. The children are encouraged to take home the school *TV Guide*, with its advertisements, for the reason that this gives parents “the first opportunity they have ever had to follow the daily school program with their children . . .” In the characteristic way of our times, the Washington County Project attempts to involve everyone, and is more democratic than Democracy. Everyone is sampled, questioned, asked to “participate,” tabulated and eventually neutralized. While the technologically new is stressed, and scorn is heaped on those who cannot “make changes and adjustments in accustomed ways of thinking and acting” care is taken at every step to see that nothing new is really done. The sponsors of the Project have made great efforts to “sell” the community on the use of TV. “Press and radio releases were prepared to acquaint the public with the plans for the project. Demonstration lessons were taught by television to service clubs, community organizations and Parent-Teacher Associations . . .” One can easily imagine the neutralizing pressures brought to bear by the “service clubs, community organizations and Parent-Teacher Associations,” and the delight that they all may share in the prospect of easy control that single, uniform, county-wide lessons provide. There will be nothing controversial, nothing new, as long as these guardians of public morality stand firm. But there will be gadgets, and plenty of patriotic entertainment.

Perhaps the most curious pages of the *Report* are those that tabulate the responses of the community through use of “the most appropriate objective techniques.” Five hundred and

twenty families, selected by "a probability cluster sampling technique" were interviewed. Among other questions, the families were asked:

1. How do you feel about the children, teachers, and schools of Washington County taking part in this experiment?
2. Do you think that the use of television in the schools will give children a better education, give children a poorer education, or make no difference?
3. If you had a choice, would you prefer your child to take lessons with television or without television?

The results are interesting: to the first question, 78 per cent responded "favorably"; but only 54 per cent thought, in response to the second question, that the use of TV gave the children a better education; while to the third, only 49 per cent responded "with television." The interpretation of this response should give some new slants on "sociometric techniques" if nothing else.

But if anyone is really in doubt about what is at stake in the Project, the responses to the same questions of "industrial and business leaders on Education-Industry Day after they had personally visited the television center and seen the project in operation in the classroom" should clarify things considerably. Of these leaders, 96 per cent responded favorably to Question 1; 89 per cent thought TV gave the children a better education; and 75 per cent preferred lessons with television.

One further group was consulted: the teachers themselves. With a picture of the future before them, they hardly needed instruction in how to vote. Eighty-three per cent declared TV "a stimulating adventure in education"; 83 per cent "would . . . prefer the aid of television . . . in the class you are now teaching"; 89 per cent believe that "television can improve the quality of instruction in our schools"; 81 per cent think that "the total time devoted to televised instruction per day is just right . . ."

The response of the teachers explains more clearly than anything to date the silence of the profession on the whole question of televised instruction. It is perfectly clear to everyone that TV instruction is on the way and can no longer be stopped. (Witness this recent report from the New York World-Telegram and Sun: "The most ambitious plan to date is to beam seventy-two

educational courses from a DC-7 aircraft circling at more than 20,000 feet . . . to 5 million students in 13,000 schools and colleges in Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan and Kentucky. . .") It is the 100 per cent American way of "solving" our difficulties in education, and those who oppose it are not only lost, without jobs, but run the risk of being classed as subversives. But even beyond that, I am convinced that many teachers yearn for the glamor of TV teaching, and lose themselves easily in dreams of glory.

The prospect of projecting one's "personality" on hundreds, if not thousands, of captive students is a tempting one for the teacher, as is the prospect of higher pay which is held out. The TV teacher avoids daily contact with children, does not have to wipe their noses or answer their questions, need not develop the old virtues of patience, kindness and charity which distinguish the best classroom teachers. He need not even be intelligent. The TV teacher can concentrate on "technique," on the messing about with second-hand facts which is called "research" in our educational systems, on conferences with director-producers, and on the development of a glamorous teacher-image. Eventually, however, there is no reason why the TV teacher should not be replaced by a professional actor, someone of unquestionable charm and "personality." Just as our weather reports are compiled by meteorologists but recited by models, our schools can use prepared lessons recited by the heroes of TV serials, or decorated by the presence of Hollywood starlets to assure the attention of the class in Solid Geometry. Is there really any reason at all why our curriculum of Core and Social Studies and Controlled Reading should not be designed once and for all by the NEA and filmed in Hollywood for use and re-use, until the happy day when the Single-Shot Education Injection is invented?



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TWO POEMS

by **ROBERT PACK**

The Friendship

Playing some childhood game, your brother
Crushed your finger in a door.
And I recall how limp your handshake was,
How your hand hid in your pocket
When you talked, as if your body
Had no speech beyond your tongue.

Once, walking through the zoo,
You put your arm around my shoulder,
And to show my friendship, I longed to face,
In the jungle of my bravery,
With just a knife, that tiger, pacing
His magnificent thirst back and forth
Beyond all satiation and repose.
"To love another we kill ourselves," I said.
And you replied, "He loves the best who acts
In desire and in his own behalf."

Now you have betrayed me, but both of us
Lack courage to admit it. Why can't I learn
Not everyone will love me?
Friends will ask you how I am,
And you—with your torn finger
Curled around a glass of beer—
Will reply you have not seen me for a while,
And in their hearts the doors will close
That once in kindness let me in.
"You have enemies," I tell myself:
Keep your own counsel even with your friends;
"And trust to luck a woman's love
Will not unman you or destroy itself."

You felt weakened, and betrayed me;
Is it my fault this came about?
Others have suffered such a grief before,
Abandoned at sea, in deserts left behind,
The wounded—holding out veined fingers
In our most hidden sleep. Why could I not
Believe them? Tomorrow it will happen
In other places to other friends, some hurt,
Injured by the ease with which they gave,
Some hurt receiving what they sought. And I—
I close the door that let you in,
Betraying my grief, which alone,
Through all the speeches of my heart,
Speaks faithfully about you.

The Stairs

I

White, pointed shoes and ankles trimmed
By morning shade, she is stepping down
The stairs on my father's holiday
In the fuss and flutter of her dress;
And we are waiting for her, queen
Of sandwiches and admonishments.

On the walnut table by the window
Green grapes and tangerines, each
With a single eye of light, blinking
Like glass, rest by a punched cigar box—
To keep the toads and salamanders,
The praying mantis and the indian pipes,
That I will capture on this day—
As we wait for her, stepping down
The sunday stairs on my father's morning.

And on this day that lasted out
The summertime of my father's kingdom
Of woods all ringaleaveo,
There by the window, pooled with sun,
By the grape and tangerine lit table,
In my turtle-neck red sweater,
Stands my sister: I am supposed
To take her with me, and, knowing I will,
I tell her No, that girls get eaten
In the pine-grove by the giant's cave.

This day's goodnight—the puppet show,
For which we kept ourselves awake,
By the pavilion where the lake
Smeared moonlight with the lantern-glow
White, white as her pointed shoes stepping
Down the stairs as we wait for her
On the holiday morning of the sunday
Of my father's summertime.

II

Mother, your husband is long dead:
What will you find to do when I
No longer need your consolation?
Shall the old deceptions sustain us
Though a thousand times we have exposed them?
In the knuckled shade of this twisted tree,
Peeling an orange, I watch the geese
Climb from the lake, their white throats thrust
In a broken fanfare of misted wings.

My children, if ever I am a father,
Will they inherit this stilled hour
When the heart abandons its alarm,
Recalling at the top of the stairs
Someone I love descending to them?

Robert Pack's "The Mountain" appeared in the Summer 1960 FORUM. Mr. Pack holds the M.A. from Columbia University and is an instructor in English at Barnard. His third volume of poetry will be published by Macmillan in 1961.

TWO LETTERS FROM AN AMERICAN AT CAMBRIDGE

The Catcher in the Rye Complex

by HENRY EBEL

To the COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY FORUM:

December, 1959

"Emmanuel College . . . is also noted for its pleasant gardens, with a lovely reed-fringed lake and swans floating among the water lilies. John Harvard, who later founded the American University, had rooms there on F staircase. They are still preserved as he had them, with three mysterious bullet-holes in the oak panelling and a cut-out in the door labelled 'For the Cat.' Each year an American scholar occupies them."

My quotation is from a slick and breezy little booklet entitled *This Is Cambridge*, which the visitor or student at this 800-year-old institution can purchase for the rather exorbitant price of ten shillings sixpence (approximately \$1.50). If a certain air of ambiguous mystery hovers over the account of John Harvard's rooms, it may be taken as symbolic of the general position of American students in the University. That position is nothing if not ambiguous.

One thing is clear—an American arrives at Cambridge with a series of distinct advantages: age, worldliness and money. He is generally older than the undergraduates among whom he moves, and he is generally more experienced. He has travelled less, perhaps, than many an English schoolboy of sixteen: but travel is by no means a guarantor of sophistication. The enthusiasm and the vigor of a good American college more than compensate, I think, for the short hop to Paris or Copenhagen; the ferment of New York makes Cambridge (or even London) look somewhat provincial by comparison.

Above all, the fellowship, scholarship or grant which an American at Cambridge may hold, or such private means as have made it possible for him to cross the Atlantic in the first place, give him a considerable advantage over most English students, if only in the unworried purchase of sherry, "biscuits," books and framed prints for his walls.

These are very considerable advantages. Add to them the fact that there is, on the surface at least, no language barrier; that the most nagging restraints and demands of an American university are almost completely lacking; that Cambridge is an exquisitely beautiful place—and one would expect to find the American student an integral, functioning member of Cambridge life, contented, respected and happy.

Yet what seems on the surface to be an earthly paradise is not necessarily that. American students at the Cambridge colleges are seldom wholly at ease or conspicuously happy; and at Clare College, which despite its middling size has the largest number of Americans in residence, the American "community" sometimes looks suspiciously like a defensive huddle, a pale but unmistakable refraction of the Ivy League. (With some of the Ivy League's very worst features: the anemic, quasi-intellectual wit, the continual facetiousness, the peculiar mixture of knowingness and embarrassment.)

Part of this is undoubtedly traceable to the peculiar position in which Americans at Cambridge find themselves. They have all, to some extent, left fully formed lives behind them—a family, close friends, a recognized position of some sort at their respective universities—to which they will return within a year or two. They have already passed through the full cycle of undergraduate life, and are not, most of them, inclined to begin all over again by joining a dramatic society, a literary magazine, or the student newspaper; the "extracurricular" life of the University moves on without them—infantile, sometimes, but undeniably alive. As a result, the years an American spends at Cambridge often seem vaguely unreal: an interlude, if not an outright punishment.

This sense of isolation—undefined, vague, yet undeniably there—is immeasurably enhanced by a bridgeable but profound gulf between

Americans and Englishmen: by the discovery which every American makes for himself, that beneath the similarity of language there exist astonishing divergencies of background and ways of thinking. The misunderstandings—the *snobismus* and the counter-*snobismus*—are perhaps more subtle than they were twenty or thirty or fifty years ago, less openly prejudicial. But this makes them all the more difficult to define, and all the more difficult to grapple with.

The assumption that cultural barbarism of some sort is implicit in American intellectual life seems nearly extinct among English academicians, if we except a few of the donnish wraiths who flit through the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement*, an occasional utterance by Mr. C. S. Lewis, or a random aside by this or that young Cambridge lecturer intent on proving that he is not in the *least* Red-Brick. But it has a residual tenacity among the less well-informed. One undergraduate told me, in a conversation of a few weeks ago, how amused he had been by the newspaper accounts of the Charles Van Doren affair. (He may have been reading Alistair Cooke's dispatches to *The Guardian* on this subject. In one of the most insensitive bits of journalism yet foisted on the English public, Cooke demonstrated how thoroughly vapid his irony really is.) I pointed out at length that the story seemed to me simply grave and tragic, and rather full of implications regarding the effects of television and the position of the intellectual; to which he replied simply that "that sort of thing couldn't happen over here"—that the subtle and not-so-subtle barbarities of television, like Napoleon and Hitler, would never set foot on this tight little island. (He may subsequently have had a good look at English commercial television: the enemy is no longer battering at the gates but safely within the parlor.)

Another undergraduate, a freshman, spent a week or two in New York City. He tells me (with a knowing leer) of the prostitutes in Times Square, the gross overt sexuality of American women, and the feverish love-lives of American undergraduates. There is a kind of envious appreciation mingled with his sarcasm; but whatever the particular nuances of his beliefs (and he is fairly intelligent), it is clear that his dominant impressions of the United States have little to do with matters of the

spirit. And like so many Englishmen he has absorbed only one fact about American education: that the condition of the high schools is appallingly bad.

Thus, the American student who ventures further afield in the University than his own college, or who remains in his own rooms dispensing coffee and sherry, is confronted with the almost continual necessity to explain, to define, to correct. He is by no means received with hostility. Quite the contrary: the fact of being American makes him, frequently, the center of interest in a gathering. But even with sympathetic listeners it is an exhausting and discouraging role to play; and at the end of it there sometimes lies the knowing remark which says, in effect: "Oh, but you're one of the *good ones*." With a slow and insidious inevitability, the American student finds himself falling back upon his compatriots for real contact or communication.

What of the English undergraduate? Unless he has done National Service, he will probably be eighteen or nineteen upon arrival at Cambridge, and will probably come from a public school: grammar school boys are still distinctly in the minority at Cambridge, and, unless they have taken the trouble to affect public-school manners and accents, distressingly conspicuous. (Some of the more facile American theorists about "class" would find it illuminating, I think, to see it at work.) Until coming up to Cambridge, then, the English undergraduate will probably have lived one of the oddest existences ever imposed on an adolescent male. If no longer quite so grim and bleak as that described by Orwell in *Such, Such Were the Joys*, it has still lost little of its original insularity.

A few of these undergraduates are intolerable snobs and *poseurs*, like some undergraduates everywhere but with more polish and self-assurance; a few appear to have had their development arrested at age thirteen, and move in an atmosphere of boyish messiness and *camaraderie*; most of the freshmen, at least, would probably regard the social and sexual exploits of their American counterparts with some awe. And yet, having taken all this into account, one's final judgment on them cannot help but be favorable. Even the freshmen make an im-

pression of articulateness and intelligence which one would be hard-put to find among second- and third-year students at even an Ivy League university. They have an admirable command of the English language: one finds in them none of the tension between articulate (= "intellectual") and popular speech, none of the linguistic embarrassment, which characterizes too many American students. The few who are exceptionally intelligent manage, at the same time, to be relaxed, witty and even (occasionally) charming. Indeed, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the wit and charm which are the stamp of English intellectual life at its best, both in and out of print, have their source here: in this early, unforced familiarity with the English language.

If these undergraduates lack something which can be found among the students of an American college then it is a certain emotional fervor, an intensity (maligned word!), which is particularly evident at an urban school like Columbia. I had occasion, some time ago, to meet an undergraduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, who had recently paid an extended visit to the United States. He spoke with amused contempt of the prevailing *earnestness* (his word) of American academic life; and he touched on something which I believe is important. The minority who, at an American university, are deeply concerned with intellectual matters—in, above, and beyond their studies—do indeed tend to be earnest: or at least to clearly compartmentalize their serious thinking and discussion from moments of wit and playfulness. And this earnestness has its own virtue and its own vice. On the one hand, they "take themselves too seriously"—that is, they never take themselves lightly, which to my mind is the greater offense. Yet it must be admitted that numbers of them develop obsessions severe enough to warp their critical faculties, and fail to recognize that unfounded nonsense is unfounded nonsense even when it is shouted at the top of one's lungs.

More or less the same kind of balance holds true for the tone of intellectual and social life at Cambridge. Its virtue is that it tempers scholarship with civility; its vice that it enables a good many boys to cloak simple ignorance and stupidity in wit, articulateness, and charm.

As what I have said thus far implies, the pre-

vailing atmosphere at Cambridge is relaxed, sometimes to the point of somnolence. Most of all is this so when winter has descended, bringing with it the Fen mists: a bleak syndrome of grayness, damp and cold. At least as much energy is expended on the indoor round of coffee- and sherry-drinking as on actual study, and the undergraduate or Research Student is soon nighly adept at the gentle art of wasting time. Within a week of my own arrival at Cambridge two students informed me, under separate circumstances, that anyone who does not have "a good time" at Cambridge is wasting his years here; the same statement was subsequently echoed by the Tutor of one of the colleges. There is little pretense that work is primary and play to be fitted in only here and there, the almost universal practice being to reserve heavy study for vacations: and always to deny, as a matter of "face," that one does any work at all.

Yet this very somnolence, this relaxedness, this lack of aggravation, seems to deepen the sense of oppression, futility and *schmerz* felt, in varying degrees, by many of the Americans here. "It's a drag," one of them announced recently, "everything here is such a drag." And another greeted me with: "Well, are you getting everything you possibly can out of the Cambridge Experience?"—spoken with a mixture of bitterness and good humor. And so it goes . . .

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that something is at least mildly wrong. Perhaps the mistake lies in assuming that an American student of evident intelligence and talent, given an adequate amount of money, will necessarily be happy here. But perhaps, too, a generation has been raised up which finds it difficult to be really happy anywhere: and toward this view I more and more incline. The precocious sense of disillusionment and worldliness which is *de rigueur* in the eastern American colleges—the *Catcher in the Rye* complex—is a difficult burden to bear even when it seems to be the universal order of society. Its most common manifestation is the quasi-erudite wisecrack—surely the most effective weapon ever devised against any overt expression of seriousness or feeling—accompanied by the sense, the mystique, of a private and literally incommunicable tragedy; or, in a less self-consciously dramatic form, of a vast inner life—intellectual, perhaps, or moral

—which, though it never breaks through the knowing surface of banter and facetiousness, lurks iceberg-like beneath it all. This set of attitudes (I've done little justice to either their pervasiveness or their complexity) is a sad and slightly ludicrous affair when encountered on native ground. Transplanted across the sea, it becomes insidious and frustrating. It makes the very worst out of Cambridge; and rather than mitigating, it exaggerates, the obstacles Americans face here.

Those obstacles are considerable ones but they are by no means insurmountable. They don't justify a pose of bitterness and futility, a sense that one has somehow been "done in" by the world. The fault, as always, is not in our stars.

November, 1960

Perhaps it is taking something of an unfair advantage to treat oneself as a text. I can only say that my views remain, after a year, fundamentally unchanged. Here and there time has altered, not my opinions, but my emphases; looking over what I wrote a year ago, I see that in one or two places an additional word might be said.

First, a word more about the nature of the anti-Americanism in the English academic world (by which I mean Oxford and Cambridge), and the English upper class generally. It remains a quiet but firm article of faith among Tories, and neo-Tories; it is increasingly the secret vice of the English liberal.

Almost never does it take the form of personal discourtesy, and at no time that I can call to mind has it seemed to have a coherent rationale behind it. It is explainable only as a faint schizophrenia. On the one hand, there is a formal recognition that the first half of the twentieth century has brought a vigorous and sustained burst of artistic activity in the United States, such as no other nation can equal. Of the first four volumes issued in a British paperback series devoted to literary criticism, three are concerned with Henry James, Ezra Pound and Wallace Stevens; *The Penguin Book of Modern American Verse* seems (in Cambridge at least) to enjoy a phenomenally good sale. So much for good points. On the other hand there is the Bomb; there has been the occasionally phantasmagoric bungling of Mr. Herter and his Department (all

the more lurid when described in the dry prose of the *Times*); there are the peculiarly insulated American air-bases, enclosed in miles of barbed wire; there are the American GI's, a thoroughly random sample of humanity which includes the intelligent and articulate, the loud and brash, and those conspicuous few who are little more than unlicked bear-whelps; and there is the American high-school system.

An American reader might be inclined to say simply (and correctly) that these two 'compartments' have nothing whatsoever to do with each other: but they live in a state of uneasy coexistence, in the minds of many intelligent Englishmen, and in a pinch, when instinctive reactions rather than sustained thought come into play, it is the latter 'compartment' which has to bear the weight of the adjective "American."

In itself all this might be no more than a prolegomenon to the observation that we all have our prejudices, and isn't it interesting how genuinely irrational they are? But this antagonism has a heavy bearing on the lives of those Americans who come to England neither as soldiers nor as whirlwind tourists, and who remain here for one to five years. It takes one man to hold a prejudice, but it takes two, ordinarily, to make an Anglophile, or to concoct that strange amalgam of self-consciousness, pride and self-dislike which animates a good many of us here in our relationships with Englishmen. It takes two to set up a more or less perverse quasi-relationship in which condescension (or mild contempt), prejudice, pride, snobbery, and inverted snobbery all find a place.

The English contribution to such a relationship is understandable, if not excusable. It is founded on the kind of ignorance which cannot be dispelled by newsreels and propaganda efforts, by USIA libraries, by joint communiqués, or (least of all) by the export in quantity of *Time-Life*. For better or worse, we have all become insulated against propaganda, whether it is instigated by the State Department or by Henry Luce. We cut off the feeling part of ourselves from it, and are "entertained" or "informed" but not deeply moved or changed. It is real knowledge, the knowledge of meaningful and *prolonged* human contact, which is needed, and in the case of America this is for most Englishmen impossible.

The American contribution to the same relation is more difficult to grasp, to pin down, to understand. Why should Americans still respond so strongly to the prejudice they may meet, why does it still get under their skins? Why did one young American, after two weeks in London, adopt a bowler, waistcoat and tightly-rolled umbrella, and proceed to deliver long disquisitions on the superior and mysterious ancestral wisdom of "the English." Why did another spend an inordinate amount of time carping about English roads, English inefficiency, English food, English weather, English social habits and English academic failings, as if these amounted to a personal insult? Why have I seen an expression of almost painful joy cross the face of a young American who was treated in a civil and courteous fashion by a book-seller? Why do so many conversations between Americans and Englishmen at Cambridge move on a level of innuendo, implication, veiled aggression and self-defense? Why do a few intelligent Americans (a *few*, thank God!) seem eager still, in the sixth decade of the twentieth century, to kiss the rod and thank the teacher?

No single direct answer to all these questions is possible. Each is a situation, each involves a human being; so that a flat judgment or a prescriptive exhortation must be either too facile or too pretentiously stern. Behind them, however, stands the single question of origins. Where and why do the feelings and habits I have discussed in these two letters have their beginnings?—the Anglophilia and the Anglophobia, the home-grown and exported *schmerz*? To *this* question I can, in a somewhat allegorical fashion, suggest an answer.

Take an intelligent American boy and expose him at length to a primary and secondary-school system in which he is "taught," by ordinarily unintelligent bureaucrats, material which becomes progressively more irrelevant to what is actually going on in his mind: which bores him to death with its own emended version of sweetness and light:

The lavish illustrations, many of them in color, will not only delight the student's eye; they will aid him in catching the spirit of America. From the moment he looks at the handsome cover, with its vivid representation of typical Americana, he will be strongly influenced by the art work of the volume.

In the eight pages of the Prelude, he will sense the American quality of varied regional scenes. In his study of the text selections, he will find the illustrations a powerful stimulus to comprehension and appreciation.

This is the preface to *The United States in Literature*, Chicago, 1952: designed for high school reading, and still, apparently, in print. The "text selections" include the prose and poetry of Donald Culross Peattie, Mary Johnston, Helen Grace Carlisle, Cale Young Rice, George and Helen Papashvily, Don Marquis, Ruth Suckow, Robert Haven Schauflier, Louis Adamic, M. M. Musselman, Sara Teasdale, John Mayo Gross, John Hay, Abram J. Ryan, John Bannister Tabb, and *Time* magazine. The names of William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, E. E. Cummings and Hart Crane do not occur. Only one of the serious poets whose work is included—Karl Shapiro—was born in the twentieth century. There are two poems by Shapiro, two by Emily Dickinson and two by Robert Frost, thus giving them equal weight with Philip Freneau, Bryant, Poe, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, and—John Bannister Tabb.

When he has completed his secondary school education, send our intelligent American boy to a good American college, where a systematic and (ordinarily) successful attempt is made to undermine such intellectual props as his previous training has erected. He may already have discovered for himself the somewhat dated iconoclasm of Mencken or Philip Wylie; introduce him now to the rather more relevant iconoclasm of the classroom, and of Mort Sahl; and against the excruciating dullness of Whittier and Longfellow *et al.*, and the boy's accumulated resentment against what passes on the high-school level for Literature, bring the forces of Eliot,

Pound, Cummings, Hemingway.

... but seeing he had been born
In a half-savage country, out of date;
Bent resolutely on wringing lilies from the acorn
Capaneus ...

Having thus broken the ice of our young man's apathy, give him, within three years, the full weight of European literature and historiography (or at least of European "classics"). Set up in his mind a clear distinction between the two classes of Americans immortalized by Jules Feiffer: those who Have Been to Europe and those who Haven't. And set up, as the crowning reward for academic achievement, an extended stay at a university on the other side of the Atlantic. As a final touch, make him liable for the draft, and see to it that he reads the *New Yorker*.

Our fortunate young man, whether he makes it to Europe or not, will now go one of two ways: either he will achieve a reasoned and sure stabilization of his own feelings *vis-à-vis* the fact of being American—a confident transcendence of both banal "heritage"-worship and reactive iconoclasm—or he will succumb to some form of *schmerz*, to -philisms and -phobias, to the kind of chronic dissatisfaction which has no cause and no cure. Sad if he should take the latter path; but I am less inclined than I was a year ago to say it is his fault, and his alone. One cannot build conviction—much less "National Purpose"—on broken reeds, on chaos and confusion.



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★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 NONSENSE
 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 AND
 ★
 FOREIGN
 ★
 AID

by **NORMAN A. BAILEY**

An immense amount of utter nonsense has been written over the last few years about the economic development of underdeveloped areas, compounded of equal parts statism, wishful thinking, hopeful prognostications, and gloom.

The only way to develop the economy of any country is through the formation of capital. There is no other way. It does not matter if the country is nominally communistic, socialistic, statist or entrepreneurial, the process is the same. Only the means differ. This point cannot be emphasized often enough or strongly enough. It is a point most unwelcome to the economic managers, wizards, and soothsayers that proliferate in the underdeveloped countries themselves. A variety of nostrums are advocated and put into practice, and when they fail, others are tried. In the meantime valuable time is lost, the world's population grows, and the world's poverty with it.

There are three main sources of capital available to any given country: public international

investment, private foreign investment, and internal investment. Of the three, the last is by far the most important. This is another fact unpalatable to the purveyors of pipe-dreams, in the industrialized as well as in the underdeveloped nations. The cry now is for international monies, as if capital from abroad were somehow more useful, more wealth-producing, more valuable than capital generated internally. But considering the magnitude of the task as usually presented—a substantial increase in the standard of living of four-fifths of the world's population—the entire sum donated or lent by all the international agencies and advanced nations put together does not amount to a hill of beans.

Furthermore, it will *not* become very much greater. The inhabitants of the industrialized nations will not stand for having their standard of living lowered. They will not even stand for having the rate of growth in that standard of living substantially lowered. They and their forebears created the wealth which they now enjoy, and to put it crudely, they control the necessary force to prevent any attempt to take it away from them. The United States is, at the present time, trying to reduce its own outflow of gold by inducing Western European countries to share a greater part of the 'burden' of foreign aid, so as not to have to *lower* the already inadequate sum that the US appropriates for such aid now.

International loans and grants are not in themselves bad, of course. They can be perfectly sound and welcome additions to gross capital formation. In practice, however, they are almost invariably misused. The bureaucracies of the underdeveloped countries are inefficient always and corrupt usually. It cannot be otherwise, and all the best will and good wishes in the world will not alter that fact. A large proportion of the money made available is thus not utilized in any effective way. Another evil effect of these loans and grants is that they are looked upon and treated as a substitute for internal effort and initiative, which they are not, and cannot be. As such, they can be highly dangerous. International financial aid is a wonderful thing when properly used. It is not so used.

Private foreign capital is another matter, and does not offer all the dangers of public aid. In

the first place, and most important, private capital is invested for the purpose of making a profit, and thus generates its own capital, some of which stays in the country in the form of taxes, royalties, and reinvestments, and most of which eventually returns in the form of better methods, lower costs, and greater efficiency, the fruits of the proper employment of capital. Private foreign capital thus can be of great help to an underdeveloped country. Two things, however, must be said about this: first the entire capital investment by the developed countries in the underdeveloped countries is very small in relation to their internal investment and investment in each other. Total United States private direct and portfolio investment in all areas overseas is about \$40 billion, less than ten per cent of our gross national product for the single year 1959! About 60 per cent of this investment is in areas already at a high stage of economic development. The second thing is that rather than try to encourage a greater flow of private funds through welcoming foreign investment and treating it well, the governments and peoples of most underdeveloped countries do their best to drive it out, or prevent it from entering in the first place. That they have not been entirely successful is a tribute to the spirit of enterprise.

This leaves internal capital formation. Every developed country in the world today industrialized largely through its own efforts, whether under laissez-faire capitalism, as in the United States, England, France, Germany and so forth; under state capitalism, as in Japan; or under communism, as in Russia. Expropriation, liquidation of the kulaks, low consumption, miserable wage rates, slave labor—these are nothing more nor less than capital formation, communist-style. In a capitalist system, capital is formed by the reinvestment of profits, interest and dividends. The part of labor in the formation of capital is minimal, except in the most primitive manufactures. High productivity is the result of mechanization. Mechanization is the result of the investment of capital. Nothing more, nothing less. A very simple concept, and usually misunderstood, if not maligned. For the formation of this capital, three things are necessary: the proper atmosphere, a spirit of capitalistic enterprise, and low wages. The first two are largely lacking in the underdeveloped areas. The

third is present. Real wages are always low in these countries, and there is nothing, absolutely nothing, that governments, labor unions, or the enterprises themselves can do about it. Wages are a direct result of the investment of capital, *not vice versa*, and they will not rise unless profits, substantial, continuing, and secure profits, are made by the suppliers of capital and enterprise. There is no other way.

The great industrial complexes of North America, Europe and Russia were built by two factors: the sweat of underpaid workers and the investment of entrepreneurs or governments (in the case of Russia). It may be unfortunate that it is so, but it is so nevertheless. It is unfortunate that disease, poverty and illiteracy exist, but they do exist, and neither wishful thinking nor economic panaceas nor mighty speeches will spirit them away. Only work, and profit. But the underdeveloped countries want the best of both worlds. They want to have high wages and costly programs of social welfare, and at the same time rapid industrial development. It cannot be done now any more than it was ever done in the past. The economic implementation of this attitude results only in severe inflation, and this very inflation has been converted by some countries and some economists into a principle in itself of economic development, a fine example of making a virtue of necessity.

It is true that inflation is a way to expropriate the populace and confiscate its savings, and thus is a sort of bastard method of forming capital, but inflation also causes available funds to be invested in non-productive enterprises, such as land speculation. And in any case, prolonged inflation inevitably results, sooner or later, in disgust with the government and collapse of the economic system.

It must also be said that some countries can never be, and will never be, industrial powers. They simply do not have the necessary resources, skills, raw materials or social setting to become highly mechanized and complex societies. This is not a counsel of despair. Neither Denmark nor New Zealand are highly industrialized countries, but they enjoy prosperity and a high standard of living by acquiescing in, and using, the international division of labor, rather than fighting it

at every turn.

Unfortunately, it must also be said that given our present level of technology, there are many nations and regions in the world that will never become wealthy, either through industry, specialized agriculture, or in any other way. These are the over-populated, under-developed and raw material-lacking countries, of which there are more than most people like to think. This may, of course, change. Power may be derived from the sun, food from seaweed, and so forth. But at present they are just as much condemned to poverty in the world as a whole as are certain parts of the United States within the world's richest country.

But all the underdeveloped countries can raise their standard of living somewhat, and some can become wealthy and powerful. They can do it in the communist way, by adopting policies better fitted to beasts than men, by losing every vestige of self-respect, dignity and individual initiative.

Or they can do it within a framework of political freedom through work, low wages, honesty, efficiency, free enterprise, high profits regularly reinvested, a government that confines itself to improving transportation, communications, education and health, and through as much foreign private investment as the country can attract. This is *not* a prescription for social justice. It is a prescription for economic development. It is curious, however, and instructive, that those countries which today have the highest degree of social justice are precisely those which in the past have followed this prescription.



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MARRAKESH

by JANE RADCLIFFE

Note: Once capital of the Saadien empire and now pacified, Marrakesh is backed by snow-capped mountains and abundant with orange trees—always untouched by the inhabitants because the fruit is a variety repulsive to the taste. Dancers and snake charmers perform every day in the central square. Some poor people starve, some rich people steal. Commitment to the city, in tribal times, always meant blood. Its beauty is wondrous.

How close to "Sunday Morning"!

But O, Stevens, did you know

That oranges could hang succulent, abundant,

In the muezzin's call of Sunday dawn as every dawn

In this land, where pillage is still in the blood

And in the air,

And hang there only because they are bitter?

Perhaps brilliance is always unkind;

Yet nowhere are trees like these palms that pierce the sky

And nowhere is the memory of tribal war so sleek

In beautiful tombs.

Tom-toms

Of the red-robed mountain men who dance, balancing

The snow peaks on their shoulders,

Beat:

Loved city.

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THE OBSCENE TATTOO

New Notes from the Soviet Underground

Three curious new works, two of fantastical fiction, come to us from the USSR. A specialist describes and interprets them.

by RUFUS W. MATHEWSON, JR.

In the second volume of his epic of collectivization, *Virgin Soil Upturned*, Mikhail Sholokhov tells us an astonishing new fact from the past of his leathery Bolshevik hero. While he is upturning the virgin soil of the *kolkhoz* he has recently organized, in the company of a proper young female ploughmate, he remembers just in time that he dare not remove his sweaty undershirt if his career in the Party is not to be blasted by scandal. Years before, while he had lain dead drunk one night in his bunk in the old Imperial Navy, his frolicsome shipmates had decorated his stomach with an obscene tattoo—which cannot be described in the antiseptic language of socialist realism. How did this gamy detail, evoking for an instant a far less hygienic life, get into this textbook novel? In Sholokhov's case we know from the passion, sweat and violence in his other—his literary—novel, *The Quiet Don*, how much of his total vision of life he has felt obliged to suppress when political concerns control his imagination.

The undescribable tattoo, which has no function in the narrative, is one manifestation of a vast underworld of unsayable things that writers, scholars and critics in the Soviet Union would like to put on public record. Since Stalin's death we have learned that the pieties of socialist realism do not begin to contain the literary energies of modern Russia. In the moments of

deepest thaw—1954 and 1956—large areas of literary unrest were made visible—found “legal” expression in the Russian revolutionary idiom—in official publications. Even though this flood of unorthodox words was quickly repudiated by every orthodox voice including Khrushchev's, we have been able to distill out of it common themes of protest against widely recognized evils in Soviet life.

Reduced to a formula, the protest might be put this way: ubiquitous public and private dishonesty has created a poisonous moral atmosphere which has deformed the human personality, corrupted the moral intelligence, blocked the channels of feeling between individual men, and tainted the heart. To combat this degradation, the writers have proposed to return to the original shining purposes of the Bolshevik Revolution, to encourage the individual to find his own best way to serve those purposes, and to refresh the sources of individual being—all within the forms and myths of the system. This is strong stuff but it is not heresy. It rather suggests those early impulses toward Protestantism when the voices for reform assumed that regeneration could be achieved within the Church, that there *was* an ancient purity to return to.

But the underground extends well beyond these earnest and high-minded works brought

out in the official publications. Boris Pasternak assumed that the corruption of the human being was the result, not of abuses within the system, but of a fundamental miscalculation in Marxism-Leninism about the chief ends of man. *Doctor Zhivago* is, among other things, a polemical assault on the cosmological foundations of the Soviet state. Though Pasternak offers no simple prescription for salvation, the ingredients of one are there: the sanctity of private experience, the unique resources of the Russian spirit, a Darwinian and Christian theory of history, the transforming power of love and art. This, I suggest, is true heresy and it called down a classic martyrdom on Pasternak's head when his novel was published abroad.

There seem, then, to be two possible memberships in the Soviet literary underground, one for the discontented, one for the disaffected. Three documents—by two Russian authors—which have engaged and puzzled Western readers during the past year help us to mark the boundary between the two states of mind. One is Vladimir Dudintsev's teasing yet attractive fable, "A New Year's Tale," first published in the Soviet literary monthly *Novy Mir*, and subsequently in English translation in a number of Western periodicals, *Partisan Review* and *The Reporter* among them. The other two, by an unknown Soviet writer, were smuggled out of the USSR and submitted, presumably with the author's approval, to M. Jean-Marie Domenach, editor of the French journal *Esprit*. Domenach published one, an unsigned essay titled "Socialist Realism," in his own journal, and sent the other, a complex fable about Soviet life titled "The Trial Begins," and signed with the obvious pseudonym Abram Tertz, to the editors of *Encounter*, in England, who brought it out in January 1960. The fables of both men have recently been published as books here in America and the essay will appear as a book this spring.

Vladimir Dudintsev is well known in the West as the author of the controversial novel *Not By Bread Alone*, one of the most outspoken works of the 1956 thaw. Since then he has been in and out of favor: when his novel was denounced and withdrawn he refused to rewrite it or to apologize, but the sentence of royal displeasure was lifted when Khrushchev told a recent Writers' Congress that the novel had some

very telling points to make about Soviet life. With the publication of "A New Year's Tale" in *Novy Mir*, Dudintsev has reappeared at the center of Soviet literary life.

Western commentators have agreed that his fable is cryptic but they have tended to assume that his work conceals daring criticisms of the Soviet regime under the traditional veils of "Aesopian" expression. Three elements of the fable have seemed to them pregnant with subversion: a mysterious group of "bandits," an unidentified "dark continent" to which two scientist-heroes hope to give their discovery of artificial sunlight, and a supernatural owl which haunts both men as a premonition of early death.

If these symbols are truly charged with subversive meanings, one must first inquire how Dudintsev's fable came to be printed in the regime's leading literary review. We must assume either complicity or stupidity on the editor's part. Neither seems likely. Perhaps, then, it is possible to read the fable satisfactorily as a harmless, or at worst a mildly critical, document. If so, then contrary meanings, if they exist at all, must be deeply hidden, yet unmistakable once they are brought to light.

One tries to imagine how a Soviet editor would have read Dudintsev's manuscript when it was first submitted. He would recall from the earlier novel the author's preoccupation with the lonely individualist who makes his contribution to the common welfare in his own way, outside normal channels if necessary, without reference to regulations if they block progress, despite indifference, hostility or malicious persecution. He would discover two versions of the same figure—two scientists—in "A New Year's Tale," but he would find that the obstacles to their success were less explicitly social, and described in less disturbing language than in the novel.

The younger scientist has begun to settle into a careerist's groove in the institute where he works. His reputation rests on a pointless and spiteful dispute which he carries on in a scientific journal with an unknown colleague. An elaborate monogrammed coat-hanger in the office marks the solidity of his position and the increasing complacency of his attitude. The disturbing element which sets the story in motion is the legendary owl which appears first as part

of an ancient inscription, then as a supernatural presence. In both guises he is a reminder of the imminence of death.

Here the Soviet editor would feel obliged to compare Dudintsev's expressed view of death with the conventional Soviet attitude. Preoccupation with one's own death is regarded as an anti-social attitude typical of self-pitying bourgeois intellectuals. In the USSR man's mortality is accepted as an unpleasant—even a tragic—fact, but the solitude and pain that accompany death are dispelled in the dying individual's mind by the knowledge that his particular contribution to the collective achievement will confer a kind of immortality on him. Dudintsev's owl is a warning that death is inevitable, but the individual who reads his message correctly will dedicate himself with such intensity to his work that he will enrich his sense of internal time so that minutes become years and years become lifetimes. The fact of death is pushed to the dim limits of consciousness and its terror is in effect conquered. Dudintsev's heroes are sustained, too, by the knowledge that the products of thought and imagination are the property of all men for all time. He has certainly not offended the conventional view on any score. Indeed, he might win his editor's praise for expressing an article of doctrine in such attractive symbolic language.

The young hero's moral preceptor is a cranky individualist who works in the same institute. He is careless in his dress, and indifferent to his colleagues, who spend all their spare time watching soccer matches on television. His sole purpose in life is to complete his scientific work before he dies. The discussion of the legendary owl in the office prompts him to tell his colleagues, in the first personal conversation he has ever had with them, about his own checkered past. He had been chief of a gang of "bandits" which operated boldly and openly in Soviet society for many years. Arrested by the state and sentenced to two hundred years in prison, he had repudiated his past, won a pardon, and dedicated himself to science for the remainder of his life. But he had been marked for death by the bandit gang as a traitor. Later he is found dead with knife wounds in the back.

The Soviet editor must have been very certain that he could identify the analogy here. Who are these bandits? I think he would have

been guided by attitudes which are expressed in Dudintsev's earlier novel and are echoed in many other works published during the thaw. It is very nearly a cliché of that brief literary "movement" to identify the face of evil in Soviet life with small bureaucratic empires which grow like cancers in every kind of institution. The men who form these groups to protect the privileges and comforts of their positions are vicious, conspiratorial and frequently willing to commit a kind of murder consisting in anonymous or faked denunciations to the secret police. In Dudintsev's view, the lonely innovator is a prime target for their malice. There seems to me little doubt that he has given symbolic representation to this state of mind in his image of the bandits. And the knife in the back that kills the reformed bandit-chief enacts the international metaphor for bureaucratic assassination.

The Soviet editor would feel reasonably sure of his ground if he reasoned in the way described. His decision to publish would turn on the suitability of airing yet again one of the thaw's standard criticisms of the moral atmosphere of Soviet life. The liberal decision he took—to publish—was made easier because Dudintsev had softened his earlier criticism by translating the "realistic" pictures of Soviet evil-doing in *Not By Bread Alone* into the blurred idiom of the fable.

The older scientist and his young successor are at work on a project to create an artificial sunlight to conquer the perpetual "cold and darkness" of an unfortunate continent on the other side of the globe that "is never lighted by the sun." Again our editor must be sure he knows what Dudintsev has in mind. He may be referring to those areas of Soviet life still untouched by modern technology. Or his man-made sunlight may be intended to refer to a more general kind of enlightenment having to do with the feelings and with moral judgments. And it could very well be argued that the "dark continent" refers to our own benighted capitalist selves. Is their sunlight that of "scientific socialism"? We in the West cannot read Dudintsev's intentions clearly here—indeed, *that* may be his intention. In any case, there is nothing in his presentation of the symbol to cause one to doubt its essential meaning; it refers to service to some large sector of unenlightened mankind.

In sum, it seems to me that a good Soviet citizen can find a satisfactory, safe reading for all of the important symbols in "A New Year's Tale." Is there another layer of meaning beyond this one? I think I would agree with the Soviet editor that there is not. The central message of the fable, which does not depend directly on any of these symbols, could offend no one but a capitalist or a Soviet lotus-eater. Time's passage can be arrested and death itself conquered by drinking life "in huge swallows," by working with total concentration of effort. Industriously improving each shining hour, Dudintsev's hero discovers that "an ocean of time stood at his feet," and he wins as special bonuses the love of a beautiful woman and the heartfelt gratitude of mankind. *The Reader's Digest* would have no trouble celebrating this Soviet package of happiness earned and virtue rewarded.

The mind of the man who calls himself Abram Tertz, who smuggled "Socialist Realism" and "The Trial Begins" into Paris, is much darker and more complicated. His meanings are wrapped in multifoliate ironies. Even when they can be interpreted with reasonable certainty, we cannot feel sure we have possessed the whole of his thought. We are nevertheless obliged to do our utmost to understand him for he has risked his life and sanity to talk to us.

In the prologue to "The Trial Begins" we meet a compliant Soviet writer who receives instruction in an atmosphere of divine revelation from the Master (obviously Stalin) about the story he is about to write. In the epilogue we meet the writer again, now in a concentration camp with two of his own characters, after he has been denied the opportunity to correct the errors in his story which disqualify it as a work of socialist realism. In between prologue and epilogue is a savagely mordant story about the worst evils in Soviet life which could not possibly have been written by this foolish "writer." We are alerted, then, to two voices—that of the character, "the writer," an earnest communicant who has told the truth but somehow missed the point, and that of the story's actual author, Tertz himself, whose anger and bitterness are murderous. In the essay "Socialist Realism" there are also at least two voices. The story and the essay parallel one another, each illuminating

the obscurities in the other.

In his essay Tertz sets out to answer several provocative questions:

What is socialist realism? What is the meaning of this strange and jarring phrase? Can there be a socialist, capitalist, Christian or Mohammedan realism? Does this irrational concept have a natural existence? Perhaps it does not exist at all, perhaps it is only the nightmare of a terrified intellectual during the dark and magical night of Stalin's dictatorship? Perhaps a crude propaganda trick of Zhdanov [Politburo member in charge of cultural affairs] or a senile fancy of Gorky? Is it fiction, myth or propaganda?

His answers are unmistakably pitched to the Western ear, but they are spoken in a bewildering blend of voices. One voice explains what socialist realism is in terms intelligible to the Westerner but highly unorthodox from the Soviet point of view. The analogy he draws between Communism and medieval Christianity is typical of his eccentric and resourceful efforts to capture our attention. And yet he manages to touch on every important point in Communist literary apologetics. Indeed, the second discernible voice is that of the apologist. He emphasizes the nobility of the Communist dream, the intensity with which its believers serve it, and the suffering they have endured in its name. The theory of socialist realism is shown to be the natural and the only way literature can be made to serve this essentially religious purpose. And yet a third voice charges with destructive irony every word that seeks to justify, discrediting everything he seems to defend.

All three voices can be heard, I think, in the following excerpt. Here is Tertz explaining one important fact of Soviet intellectual life: the unanimity of opinion on all important matters. He illustrates his point with a quotation from a recent Soviet potboiler which is brilliantly apt and wonderfully fatuous:

Russia took its own road—that of unanimity . . . For thousands of years men suffered from differences of opinion. But now we, Soviet men and women, for the first time agree with each other, talk one language that we all understand, and think identically about the main things in life. It is this unanimity that makes us so strong and superior to all other people in the world, who are internally torn and socially isolated through their differences of opinion.

His comment follows:

Beautifully put! Yes, we really are all alike and we are not ashamed of it. Those of us who suffer

from superfluous differences of thought we punish severely by excluding them from life and literature. There can be no substantial differences of opinion in a country where even the anti-party elements confess their errors and wish to rectify them as soon as possible, and incorrigible enemies of the people ask to be shot. Still less can there be such differences among honest Soviet people and least of all among positive heroes who think only of spreading their virtues all over the world and of re-educating the few remaining dissidents into unanimity.

Tertz tells us something about Soviet intellectual life and speaks as an apologist for it through the deceptive "we." And yet he has at the same time disassociated himself from it by overstating his case to the point of absurdity. When he invokes the image of the class-enemy who "asks to be shot" (a familiar echo of the purge trials), the sarcastic grate in his voice discloses the venomous anger beneath the surface. And what could be better designed to provoke disgust in the Western mind than the vulgar tone of self-congratulation expressed in the quotation on unanimity? If we remain unsure of Tertz's strategic duplicity, there is a fourth voice that breaks through the ironic surface from time to time. It is his own voice. And when it speaks to us at full strength at the end of the essay, it abruptly abandons the positions of his mock-defense and tells us something of Tertz's real preferences in art. They repudiate both the socialist and realist terms of the Soviet doctrine.

The energies of other societies have been absorbed in the idea of divine purpose, he writes, "inseparable from God . . . the highest idea which is accessible to us, if not through our understanding, then through our wish that there should be such a purpose." Medieval Catholic civilization, "which seized the Purpose in its most inaccessible meaning," was followed by the "era of individualism which proclaimed the freedom of the individual as the Purpose and set about worshipping [it] with the aid of the Renaissance, humanism, superman, democracy, Robespierre, banquets and other forms of prayer." And now, since the Marxian revelation of history's meaning, there is a new purpose: "The modern mind cannot imagine anything more beautiful and splendid than the Communist ideal." But if purpose is merely the product of the "wish" that it exist, has not Soviet society duplicated the self-deception of other civilizations? There is a note of defensive pride mixed

with the amalgam of irony: "Yes we live in Communism. It resembles our aspirations about as much as the Middle Ages resembled Christ, modern Western man resembles the free superman, and man resembles God. But all the same, there is *some resemblance*, isn't there?" In his answer, irony and despair return; deception is no longer bearable. "This resemblance lies in the subordination of all our actions, thoughts and longings to that sole Purpose, which may have long ago become a meaningless word but still has a hypnotic effect on us and pushes us onward and onward—we don't know where."

The loss of sense occurs between means and ends: "The means used to reach the aim change its original appearance into something unrecognizable." Corrupt means not only corrupt the end, they abolish its meaning.

So that prisons should vanish forever, we built new prisons. So that all frontiers should fall, we surrounded ourselves with a Chinese wall. So that work could become a rest and a pleasure we introduced forced labor. So that not one drop of blood be shed any more, we killed and killed and killed.

In the name of Purpose we turned to the means that our enemies used: we glorified Imperial Russia, we wrote lies in *Pravda* (Truth), we set a new Tsar on the now empty throne, we introduced officers' epaulettes and tortures . . . Sometimes we felt that only one final sacrifice was needed for the triumph of Communism—the renunciation of Communism.

O Lord, O Lord—pardon us our sins!

If the goal is illusory or unintelligible, then the means are all; and if the means are converted into the moral opposite of the goal they were meant to serve, then a monstrous joke has been played on all believers. The man who knows this to be so cannot possibly maintain his allegiance to the original purpose. Or so it would seem.

At the end of his artful "justification" of socialist realism, Tertz criticizes the work that has been produced under its sway. It is bad art, he says, because the term socialist realism contains an internal contradiction. "Socialist," as we have seen, embodies the dream, that is to say, the religious purpose. One would expect a devotional art, celebrating the glorious future (as Mayakovsky did) and urging men forward to realize it. But "realism," that is, "a really faithful representation of life, cannot be achieved in a language based on teleological concepts." Soviet writers should give up . . . the sorry and fruitless efforts to write a socialist *Anna Karenina*

or a socialist *Cherry Orchard*." The hybrid form is bad realism, resembling rather a bad 'classicism,' devoid of life, petrified by convention, stereotype and euphemism.

He expresses regret (a mock-regret, one feels sure) that the death of Stalin "inflicted an irreparable loss upon our religiously esthetic system ("Ah, if only we had been intelligent enough to surround his death with miracles!"). If it is impossible to revive the old faith or generate a new one, where can art go? Tertz's suggestion for the future cancels both incompatible halves of socialist realism. In place of realism he proposes "a phantasmagoric art" drawn from Hoffmann, Dostoevsky, Goya, Chagall, and Mayakovsky. In place of the lost certainties of the purpose, he suggests an art based on new hypotheses, riddles and assumptions. In that way, new Russian writing will learn "how to be truthful with the aid of the absurd and the fantastic."

Abram Tertz's story "The Trial Begins" seems only to animate the ideas in his essay, rather than to demonstrate the empirical surrealism that is to replace socialist realism. It is a brilliantly ironic tract making use of dreams, hallucinations and other suspensions of life-like life, but it is not a finished work. One has the impression of a notebook overflowing with savage vignettes about Soviet life, each designed to illustrate another corrupt relation between means and ends. The fate of private lives and the destiny of the society are shown to depend on the failure to find a proper and viable connection between them. If one has begun to suspect at the end of the essay that Tertz is a nihilistic ironist who can find little to live by in recent Russian history, the story does nothing to dispel the notion. But one notes his nostalgic attachment to the romantic explosion of emotion with which the Soviet era began and his steady praise of Mayakovsky, whose work he sees, paradoxically, as the purest and best of the socialist realists and as the only contemporary source for belief in the future of art.

In his introductory interview with the witless "writer," the Master (Stalin) tells him who the hero of the story is to be. It is Vladimir Globov, Public Prosecutor, a solid citizen whose work places him at the center of the apparatus of judicial terror. He is a merciless foe of the regime's "enemies" ("Let scores, let hundreds of inno-

cents be condemned, rather than that one enemy should go free"), an initiator of the prosecution of the Jewish doctors in the last years of Stalin's life, and a tireless spokesman for the regime's version of the correct relation between means and ends ("The aim sanctifies the means, it justifies every sort of sacrifice"). In the course of the story he watches his adolescent son prosecuted and jailed as an enemy of the people (on advice from "on high," he refuses to intervene in his defense). His wife betrays him twice—by aborting their child, and by carrying on a public affair with the lawyer Karlinsky, a new kind of cynical Soviet dilettante. As he loses his grip on reality, Globov locks himself in his study, gets solemnly drunk, and hacks his furniture to pieces with a Caucasian sword in a lunatic battle with imagined enemies. He is nearly trampled by a frenzied crowd when Stalin dies, but he emerges in the new era with a promotion, clearly indicating that Tertz believes the corrupted means on which the system rests (Globov is one of them) have not been changed.

Globov's son, Seryozha, is treated with the cruelest irony. The boy's own sense of means and ends has prompted him to ask some simple but devastating questions about "just" and "unjust" wars. Why was the Russian imperial conquest of the Caucasus a progressive act and similar British actions reactionary? His uncomfortable father answers that the "Glorious Aim" is all and warns him to watch his step. When the boy develops his ideas into a program for a new revolution, the sophisticated Karlinsky recognizes elements of Trotskyism in it, and as an act of elemental self-protection denounces the boy and his friend Katya to the police. Tertz makes his most telling point when he shows that the young innocent has fallen into the same moral trap that has caught all Russian revolutionaries since the middle of the nineteenth century. Its source in the past is made clear by Seryozha's admiration for Rakhmetov, the central figure in "What's To Be Done?" (1864), Nikolai Chernyshevsky's primitive tract on revolutionary heroism. (The work inspired successive generations of Russian radicals, including Lenin's, and may be said to have formed the Russian revolutionary ethos.) The trap—again—concerns means and ends. According to one plank in Seryozha's platform, any man who hurts another man's feelings will be shot!

Karlinsky collects Japanese prints and pornographic pictures, listens to the BBC and Radio Free Europe when the Soviet jammers permit. He is dedicated to a life of private pleasure and is haunted by the fear of his own death. He is a master of official jargon, however, emitting clouds of it like the ink of a cuttlefish, when he feels threatened by the youthful revolutionaries:

Objectively speaking . . . the logic of the struggle . . . the wheel of history . . . He who is not with us . . . Encirclement . . . Socialism in one country . . . In essence . . . Speaking objectively . . . Counter . . . xism . . . ism, ism, ism . . . Principle . . . inciple . . . jective . . . Manity . . . lution . . . Pferd . . .

Karlinsky's pursuit of Globov's wife is meant to comment from a peculiarly squalid vantage on the moral dislocation which affects the entire society. Her aim is to be worshipped for her beauty. By paying elaborate court to her, Karlinsky transforms himself into a means to serve her aim, but he does so only to achieve his own aim, which is seduction. When his goal comes—literally—within his reach, he fails ingloriously while she taunts him for his impotence. The joke is on him. The goal, itself, so to speak, mocks his strenuous, hopeless efforts to achieve it.

Scenes of savage humor dramatize Tertz's indictment of the world he inhabits. In a gay party of secret police officers, representatives of a "dread invisible army," a lively conversation about the latest movies, the school records of their children, the colors of the new model cars, fades gradually into silence. It is an occupational precaution of secret policemen, we learn, to grow silent as they get drunk. They end up staring into space, "as dumb as the fish" they have been eating.

Socialist realism is stood on its head by a deft reversal of meanings. Our hapless writer has ended in a labor camp because he has not portrayed the "positive" characters "in all the fullness of their many-sided working lives" nor exposed the "reactionary basis" of the motivations of the "negative" characters. These are established clichés of current criticism, but Tertz's irony comes home to us when we realize that the positive ones are Globov, faithful arm of the State, his wife, and Karlinsky the denouncer of children, and that the villains are Seryozha and Katya, the doomed young idealists. The conclusion: socialist realism, devoted to the service of the state, is a literature utterly without moral foundations, that is to say, not a literature at all.

One striking symbol crystallizes Tertz's final thoughts on the questions of ends and means. Rabinovich, the accused abortionist who seems to speak for Tertz on several occasions, discovers an ancient artifact during his labors in the prison camp. It is a dagger with a handle in the form of a crucifix. Rabinovich reads its meaning for us: "God was the end and they turned Him into the means—a handle. And the dagger was the means and became the end." And again: "In the name of God! With the help of God! In place of God! Against God!" Thus, in a sequence of slogans, the cycle of perversion that has killed the dream.

What is left standing? What hope is there? On this score, Dudintsev and Tertz stand quite opposed. Tertz, himself, has drawn the distinction between them in blunt terms. Referring to Dudintsev's novel *Not By Bread Alone*, he writes in his essay: "The most successful writers are those who can present our achievements as truthfully as possible and our failings as tactfully, delicately and untruthfully as possible." Dudintsev's ability to derive a hopeful and restorative message from the facts of Soviet life is the product of self-deception, made possible by his superficial sense of evil. Tertz has seemed to suggest on several occasions that new generations may invent a new Purpose, even if it requires new inquisitions to sanctify it. Responsive by now to the rhythms of his thought, we suspect that they will merely be repeating the folly of all civilizations. But is it not perhaps a necessary deception, an indispensable fiction that men must accept in order to live? It may be, but it is one the truly ironic intelligence can never live with. Rabinovich assumes the aspect of a prophet of despair when, "a puny Jew with a shorn head, in tattered muddy trousers and with a rusty dagger under his arm," he utters his final word in an insane cackle: "And now there is no God, only dialectics. Forge a new dagger for the new Purpose."



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BEFORE THE HOUSE

KAFKA IN POLAND

LEO HAMALIAN

A mass society has neuroses of its own. For many years, Franz Kafka was denounced by the official Communist party line as an esoteric experimenter who ignored "man in society"; Soviet critics have written about Kafka as a masochistic reactionary who escaped into private unrealities. Yet at this moment, according to the English critic V. S. Pritchett, young Poles behind the Iron Curtain buy up, read, and discuss Kafka's work with great eagerness and admiration. They have discovered, reports Pritchett, that Kafka describes exactly *the state of conscience* of a people forced to exist in a society organized by mass dogma and dialectic.

Unfortunately, Pritchett went no further with this interesting but cryptic observation, and recent journalism about Poland, distorted as much of it has been either by sensationalism or superficiality—in short, by ideology—hardly helps to explain this new popularity of Kafka. But recently, Martha Gellhorn, a first-rate reporter, won the confidence of a number of young Polish intellectuals, artists, and workers, and out of her intimate and agonizing conversations with them, produced two masterly articles for *The Atlantic Monthly* that do illuminate Kafka's current popularity among the Poles.

Poland, says Miss Gellhorn, has become a prison—with small doors opening to the West. The effects of bureaucracy may be felt every day and everywhere, and that bureaucracy is understood to be a capricious tyranny which looks with suspicion upon a man wearing a new pair of trousers. Anxiety, disgust, hopelessness are everywhere the visible results of despotic organization, and human hopes, human needs, and human nature are under constant attack by "policy." "What eats into the soul is the sense of being trapped," one young Pole told Miss Gellhorn. "All the young are in despair, *a priori*,"

Leo Hamalian's article "The Lady Chatterley Spectacle" appeared in the Winter 1960 issue of the FORUM. He is an assistant professor of English at the College of the City of New York and holds two Columbia degrees.

another confided. Nearly all those she talked to, both inside and outside the Party, hate and fear the regime that has rationed their freedom; yet for accepting it, they suffer self-contempt and guilt.

It is no wonder, then, that this generation of Poles should discover their dilemma foreshadowed in the hallucinatory vision of Kafka, especially in those images of transformation and metamorphosis that burn themselves on the memory of anyone who has read his short stories or journals. (Selections from both the stories and the journals are published in America by Schocken Books.) It is in these images, these drastic departures from the familiar norms of the literary imagination, that we find conveyed the dreadful truths of depression, loneliness, and anxiety.

In these fantasies of transformation, sometimes the beast becomes a human, more often the human becomes a beast, but always clinging to the image of metamorphosis is the odor of guilty terror and anguish that make dehumanization poignant. Most powerful of all is the yearning for freedom in one who cannot define what he yearns for, a yearning that culminates in the wish for death as a relief from suffering.

Animals that become men and men that become animals are not new in literature. In Homer, for instance, the men of Odysseus are turned into swine, and in Apuleius the protagonist becomes a jackass. Such metamorphoses are intended as a stage prior to moral elevation or as an episode in a chain of larger events. In the work of writers from Aesop to Orwell, from Swift to Capek, creatures represent classes of humans. But in these works the fantasy follows a clear-cut line of logic and represents what in itself it is not; that is, the story becomes an allegory bearing a message which could, if necessary, be stated in discursive language with no loss of logic or clarity. Hence, its terms of reference are abstractions of one kind or another—retribution, hubris, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie—and lack the evocative power of Kafka's images of transformation.

When we examine the nature of Kafka's images, we are reminded of Albert Camus' remark that Kafka offers the reader everything yet confirms nothing. Dream and reality fuse in a way that obscures (though Kafka's language is never obscure) any neat allegorical point or pattern. In reference specific and concrete, his images

of transformation express an intensely personal response to the world, yet their substance has shadows which suggest what is going on beyond the circle of the private. His symbols partake of the reality which they render intelligible.

Though Kafka was capable of dreaming his own original nightmares, he may have found a starting point in the neoromantic *Märchen* that were so popular in Prague just as he was trying his apprentice hand, or in the hair-raising tales of terroristic transformation that his friend Gustav Meyrink had made a reputation on, but a likelier source of inspiration was one of Kafka's idols, Feodor Dostoyevsky.

In that stunning short novel, *Notes from the Underground*, there is a singular passage that may have fastened on Kafka's sensibility much as certain lines from Christopher Marlowe impressed themselves subconsciously upon T. S. Eliot's. A "spiteful" clerk who works in the government bureaucracy is speaking his secret mind:

I used to feel . . . a continual, intolerable humiliation at the thought, which passed into an incessant and direct sensation, that I was a mere fly in the eyes of all this world, a nasty disgusting fly—more intelligent, more highly developed, more refined in feeling than any of them, of course—but a fly that was continually making way for everyone, insulted and injured by everyone.

It is the spirit of this passage to which Kafka, who worked as a clerk in the Austrian bureaucracy himself, gave the ultimate expression in *The Metamorphosis*. But we see him first trying out the image of metamorphosis in a story called "Wedding Preparations in the Country," an early fragment (1907). A commercial traveller, Eduard Raban, is leaving Prague for a fortnight in the country during which he is to marry his fiancée Betty, "an oldish pretty girl." In the train, Raban rolls anxiously through the night, speaking his interior thoughts (no one has told him that the interior monologue has not yet been invented):

As I lie in bed I assume the shape of a big beetle, a stag beetle or cockchafter, I think. The form of a large beetle, yes. Then I would pretend that it was a matter of hibernating, and I would press my little legs to my bulging belly.

When Raban finally arrives at the village, we are told no more, for the story ends exactly where *The Castle* thirteen years later will open. From the evidence of this fragment, we assume that the marriage would not have taken place and also that the story would not have reached the deepest layers of Kafka's subconsciousness, the source of those hallucinations that have become realities in the modern bureaucratic state. This penetration was reserved for *The Metamorphosis* (1916), that novella which from its opening lines makes us "suffer like the death of someone we love more than ourselves" (Kafka's words to Oskar Pollak):

As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams, he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect. . . . What has happened

to me? he thought. It was no dream.

What horrifies and fascinates the reader at once, as Samsa becomes brother to Raban's beetle, is that no one within the story regards the happenings as "impossible"; it is a nasty business, to be sure, but in various ways the people around Samsa, seemingly sane and simple, adjust themselves to a startling situation. Even Samsa himself, albeit with abject disgust, comes to terms with the undeniable urges which compel his body to carry on a life that has become questionable to itself. The final horror is that he must atone for a crime the gravity and even the name of which we cannot know. We do know it is related to his father, and that, as in an earlier story called *The Judgment*, the father has been graduated from a purely familial role and generalized into a symbol of inscrutable authority, not unlike the powers represented in *The Trial* and *The Castle*.

A similar mood pervades the famous letter written three years later and beginning, "Dearest Father, you asked me recently why I maintain that I am afraid of you." For accepting the despotism of his father, Kafka, who despised discipline imposed from the outside, denounces himself as a "crawling, furtive creature" destined to be "pushed down into the filth." Echoing *The Metamorphosis*, he confesses the wish "to crawl to a clean little spot on the earth where the sun sometimes shines and one can warm oneself a little." Alternately cringing or critical in tone, the letter was never sent—otherwise Kafka might have heard his father roar once again his favorite threat, "I'll tear you apart like a fish!" If it seems strange that Kafka, at the age of thirty-seven, should still have regarded himself as vermin in the eyes of his father, it is fortunate for literature that he did not succeed in auto-analyzing his *Angst* away.

In these stories and this letter, we have the heart of the typical Kafka story, what Philip Rahv calls "the nuclear fable to which he returns again and again, varying and complicating its structure with astonishing resourcefulness." The real horror and truth of this fable depends upon the possibility of a unique, unpredictable, intelligent human individual being thrust suddenly into a vast, anonymous, automatic world where the only active decision still required of him is, in the words of Hannah Arendt, "to abandon his individuality, the still individually sensed pain and trouble of living, and acquiesce in a dazed, tranquilized, functional type of behavior." Thus, reducing the individual self to insignificance and powerlessness removes the possibility of conflict, but it also brings about a kind of psychic dislocation that manifests itself in the loss or confusion of identity. Unmoored, the mind bends to a monstrous shape that corresponds to its reading of the role imposed upon it from without.

And so in "Scenes from the Defense of the Courtyard," a preliminary sketch for *The Castle*, the narrator momentarily imagines himself to be a "gun-dog, Karo by name," who hates his master, then becomes Caesar, a hound given to senseless running about, "an unparalleled dereliction of duty." In an entry in his journal, dated 18 November 1913, Kafka describes himself "as

capable of crouching in a dog kennel, jumping out when food is brought him, and jumping back again when he has swallowed it." The tale called "Investigations of a Dog" concerns a lonely dog made loquacious by an inexpressible feeling of alienation from the world around him, a world he has courted to the point of self-oblivion. In the bitter piece called "Jackals and Arabs," a pack of jackals plan to throw off the yoke of their cruel masters, only to be irresistibly attracted by the carcass of a camel thrown to them by a master who, while they gorge themselves, aims a few blows at them with his whip for amusement. In "Reflections on Sin, Pain, Hope and the True Way," we encounter this passage: "The hunting dogs are playing in the courtyard, but the hare will not escape them, no matter how fast it may be flying through the woods." Ambiguous as all these situations may be—for Kafka sometimes seems to identify with the pursuers as well as the pursued—they provide almost perfect correlatives for the police-state condition.

Not every Kafka character lives like a dog. In "The Burrow," a solitary and withdrawn rodent describes its precarious mode of existence in the darkness of the underground. He lives in a perpetual state of fear lest he be pursued and attacked by other animals. "My enemies are countless," he says, but we never learn what they may be like and we never actually encounter one. While the point of this parable seems to be that we can never know whether our subjective fears have any objective justification, one can guess that Poles, for instance, can easily empathize with the narrator's cast of thought. "The Giant Mole" deals with a strange monster, reminiscent of the marten-like creature of "In Our Synagogue." In "The New Advocate," Bucephalus, the battle charger of Alexander the Great, has lost his adventurous spirit and has turned timorous and tranquil in captivity. "A Report to an Academy" is a tale told by an ape who loses the law of his own nature by adopting the tricks and traits of this master ("Renunciation of self-will was the first command I gave myself"). "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk" is about the longings of a "mass of people who are almost always on the run and scurrying hither and thither for reasons that are often not very clear." In one of his other fables, a cat drives a mouse into a corner: the mouse can choose between the cat and the trap, but before it can choose, the cat eats it up.

Thus, in the phantasmagoria of Kafka's imagination, the human ego is repeatedly shorn of its power and identity. Men become mice or lice, always submissive, always cringing, always insecure and uncertain, always in fear and trembling. They become brutes with brains, who can know neither the insensate condition of the brute (as in Eliot's "pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas"), nor the joys of the aware intelligence. That intelligence may remain while freedom of action is lost is also the tragedy of Poland as Miss Gellhorn sees it. Fear and guilt invade the will and reduce it to peculiar *stasis*, in which the individual ego perishes yet lives to know its own death.

Indeed, it is easy to understand how eloquently Kafka

must speak in these stories (as well as in *The Trial* and *The Castle*) to the young people of Poland. One can only hope that he has not also spoken for their children in this passage from "The Great Wall of China":

He feels imprisoned on this earth, he feels constricted; the melancholy, the impotence, the sicknesses, the feverish fancies of the captive afflict him; no comfort can comfort him, since it is merely comfort, gentle, head-splitting comfort glozing the brutal fact of imprisonment. But if he is asked what he actually wants, he cannot reply, for—that is one of his strongest proofs—he has no conception of freedom.

ALEXANDRIA REVISITED

AN EXCHANGE

Mencken, thou should'st be living at this hour, to puncture once and for all this Durrell-Alexandria myth ["I've Been Reading"; Fall 1960]. What's got into all the critics? How can anyone take this stuff seriously?

From *Justine*:

"Shops filling and emptying like lungs."

"She gazed about her like a half-trained panther."

"She ate an olive, spitting the pit into her hand like a cat."

"She raced to him like a gun-dog and stood back, wagging her tail."

These inept similes would call for a blue pencil mark in any well-conducted English-B course.

Durrell quotes at length from an imaginary novel, but the more he pretends that it was written by someone else, the more it is Durrell. It is a style that cannot be mistaken, there is no other style like it anywhere in literature, past or present, English or foreign, drunk or sober. (Mark Twain, thou should'st be living too.) Somerset Maugham published a book of stories with no other purpose than to demonstrate the technique of writing in the first person, pointing out its advantages and disadvantages. If, for example, the narrator is A and there is a conversation between B and C at which A is not present, he cannot quote it unless we are to presume that B, C, or some other person told him about it afterwards. Durrell writes in the first person, but such things don't bother him at all. He doesn't even seem to know that there is a problem. Let alone conversations, he describes the *thoughts* going through the mind of another character:

"Then he jumped into bed and drew the sheets over his head, murmuring broken fragments of oaths and involuntary pleadings which he did not recognize as emanating from any part of himself."

Oh well, maybe Durrell was right there under the

sheets all the time and got all this stuff at first hand. And he knew where it was emanating from too. It was emanating from Durrell. The cat, of course, was under the bed, spitting out olive pits.

I rest my case on the last five pages of *Justine*. Here again we have a letter presumably written by someone else. But start reading it, and what have you got? Purest Durrell, of course. It could have been written by no one else, in or out of captivity. My theory is that he just sat down and wrote himself a letter and made believe it came from—Clea. Out of this hodge-podge of pseudo-philosophy, non sequiturs and general hazy nonsense, I submit one gem, and I am through:

"Events are simply a sort of annotation of our feelings—the one might be deduced from the other."

Go ahead, now—deduce some events from your feelings, or some feelings from your events, will you please? Let me know how it comes out. You might try pulling the sheets over your head and murmuring broken fragments of oaths, but I don't think it will help.

EMIL BREITENFELD
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Mr. Wensberg says in his notes on Durrell's *Quartet* that he shares my enthusiasm for the literarily romantic paraphernalia of the novel but wants more than I seem to from it. I too wanted a good deal more from Durrell than he gave, and *not* the high-flown philosophizing that he is so keen on. What I most wanted was a sense of the life of the people, the foreground of experience which gives perspective and solidity to the marvelous shadow world. I simply do not find the characters convincingly immediate in my imagination, though the *places* are. Without the quality of adequate felt conviction, even the best of the figures of the novel have a sort of insubstantiality which weakens the whole; it lacks a strength which any novel aspiring as high as Durrell's must have to support its claims.

Unfortunately, I was unable to find in the book the satisfaction of inclusiveness which Mr. Wensberg found besides. Finally, I suppose, I rate the book not very high in the scheme of things, not so high as he seems to.

But what was good about it seemed to me so good that my pleasure in the gorgeousness and the craftsmanship (I have, as it were, a sweet tooth for that sort of thing) was its own reason for being. In an essay without any thesis, intended, as mine was, only to tell the reader what I found likeable and valuable in a book, I think a reviewer's function is chiefly not evaluative but appreciative: *This is what I like about this book. I hope you do too.* I meant seriously my comparisons of Durrell to Graham Greene and H. Rider Haggard, both of whom I have enjoyed enormously and neither of whom I rate very high. For neither of them, nor Durrell, includes enough, fictionally speaking: not a sufficient sense of probable life and not a powerful and true imaginative construct which figures forth something about life which realism can never get to. Mostly their novels strike me as absorbing play—of true but thin value.

I have no doubt that "Torment," "Bicycle Thief," and "Marius/Fanny/César" are much the better films, but it is "King Solomon's Mines" that I have seen three times.

GEORGE P. ELLIOTT
University of Iowa

Erik Wensberg writes:

Before talking constructs with Mr. Elliott, I will peg a few olive pits back at Mr. Breitenfeld, whose good time is contagious. Mr. Breitenfeld, I am blessed if I see why the quotation from Clea's letter in *Justine* is hazy nonsense or pseudo-philosophy; it seems to me a metaphorical way of saying what Shakespeare and Freud and a number of other people have said—that our own feelings can and usually will shape events close around us; they may not have anything to do with a dog-fight across the street but they may lead us to fallings apart in foreign lands, as Clea's letter reports of *Justine*. I doubt that this sort of deduction carries weight in a *courtroom*, or rather I am sure it does not and usually should not, but much of literature depends on it heavily. As for the very ripe argument about the Consistent Point of View, do please forget about Maugham for a bit and read, say, *Moby Dick*; especially Chapters CXXLI and CXIII: are we to believe that Ishmael first clammers up to the main-tops'l yard to overhear Tashtego talking to himself as he lashes the sail in the midst of a roaring typhoon, and that he then scurries down again to overhear a two-page mutter by Starbuck as he stands outside Ahab's cabin with a musket and a mutinous temptation? And how did Queen Gertrude know that poor Ophelia went skimming down the river singing songs before she finally sank somewhere between Scenes V and VII in Act IV? If someone overheard her, why didn't he save her? Come, Mr. Breitenfeld, throw away the rules of evidence and rely on what Mr. Elliott calls "felt conviction." It won't help you to swallow some of Mr. Durrell's similes, I grant you—but I will give you twenty sound ones for every clinker you give me.

Of course, if Mr. Elliott is not convinced that Mr. Durrell's characters are or could be real, I hope I know better than to attempt to convince one novelist (Mr. Elliott) that another novelist with another imagination is quite as evocative of "real life." As Mr. Theodore Hoffman once pointed out in these pages apropos of the theater, one man's reality can be another man's King Solomon Mines. Mr. Elliott misses my point: I do believe in Mr. Durrell's people and events, just as I would bet he believes (as do I) in those grotesque souls in *The Brothers Karamazov*. If the latter are more convincing to many modern readers than Durrell's characters, I would also wager it is because they are more unpleasant, more agonized. But I am making up arguments with myself, which is what I usually do when I cannot cope with such words as "true imaginative construct." All I meant to say in my essay was that I do not think the world is so squalid or small that it does not hold beautiful and ugly and mysterious people, and exciting and surprising events, and places that contain both. I wish I came across more books than Durrell's that portray all three.

ALLAH LOVES STRONG MEN

WILTON DILLON

The theme of this anecdote is paternalism, a universal type of human relationship which seems to survive war, new technology and the invention of labor contracts. It is the kind of paternalism American Southerners easily recognize. But it is a paternalism against which many Algerians and Negro Southerners, in their quite different ways, are in revolt. Those future historians who wish also to be moral philosophers may one day pronounce the following axiom about paternalistic attitudes: paternalism invariably hurts the protector, leaving him wondering why the protected seem to turn against him, lacking gratitude and a knowledge of their own self-interest.

"Automation!" said Monsieur Bernard happily, as he stood in his white smock among the oily machines. An engineer, and one of the 5,000 or more French managers, workers, deputies and intellectuals who had been to the United States in the early 1950's to study American productivity, Bernard was taking me on a tour of his small factory outside Paris. The date was September 17, 1956. He wanted to show me the improvements in his plant since I had seen it four years earlier. He indicated its new layout, and the self-fueling Diesel boiler installed that week to give steam to the presses. "Diesel is a word the Académie Française has not yet accepted for our vocabulary, but we use it anyway. We have to have a name for the new machines we need to replace the workers we are losing to the Algerian war."

The machines, I noticed, were being operated by Arabs from North Africa. The men wore the powder-blue jackets workers wear in France. They looked up as we passed and gave slightly deferential nods to their *patron*. Their manner was more casual when a French foreman, dressed in a gray smock, stopped to speak with them on one of his supervisory rounds.

Here was a neat world, not so egalitarian as American factories where French visitors are surprised to hear American workers call their bosses by their first names, and where bosses get their hands dirty; but a world held together by a peculiar benevolence. Everybody seemed to know his place. Color of dress helped spell out rank and function, as in medieval France and in Monsieur Bernard's Church of Rome, and the North

Africans appeared to feel at home, giving their work and receiving pay and protection in exchange.

"Out of my forty-five workers, twelve have received the call for the Algerian war," Bernard explained. "The irony is that the Algerians can stay here to work. They are bachelors here in the Metropole, so if they were called, they wouldn't have to leave wives and children behind in Paris. The harshest irony is that the Algerians, who are not now permitted to go back home, attend the farewell-parties I give for the French workers who are leaving to fight the rebels in the native villages of their co-workers here."

"Why can't the workers return to Algeria; they're French citizens aren't they?"

"Yes, somewhat as your Puerto Ricans are American citizens, but there has to be some control. If the Algerians go home, what is to prevent them from hearing some Islamic prayer leader tempting them to follow Nasser's agents in a holy war against the French?" With this, Monsieur Bernard led me back to his fluorescent-lit office, copied after one he had seen in New York. Once behind his new desk, he allowed the interview to lapse into a lecture, taking on an *ex cathedra* manner I remember from professors on the baroque platforms of the College de France. I was about to receive my first lesson in the civilization of the Moslems.

"Americans understand very little about the psychology of Islam," Bernard began. "As people in your government probably have never read the *Koran*, they do not know how quickly Moslems will be able to submit to Communist authority. A *marabout* can easily become a *commissar*."

The Suez crisis was at one of its several boiling points as he spoke. The users' association was being debated in London and Paris. France, Britain and Israel had not yet marched into Suez, but Monsieur Bernard was ready to take up arms at that moment. He had just read in his *Figaro* that the U.S. was preventing France from "stopping the new Hitler in Cairo."

"Allah loves strong men. America has made herself, Britain and France—the entire Occident—look weak in the eyes of Nasser. If the United States would give us an atomic bomb, the French would know how to hold it judiciously—not use it, mind you—and there would be new respect for the Western world."

Monsieur Bernard then told me the situation was all the more grave because Nasser knew that it was Roosevelt who had told the Sultan of Morocco that the United States would help put the French out of the door of North Africa. To prove his point, Bernard took down from his bookshelf a copy of Elliott Roosevelt's book, *As He Saw It*. Red pencil marks underlined the paragraph stating what Elliott heard his father tell the Sultan about a promise for American moral support against colonial rule. The book was worn from circulation among relatives and business friends.

"I am not interested in partisan politics in America," he went on. "The doctrinal lines between the Republicans and the Democrats seem too fuzzy." What was clear to him, as a French bourgeois and patriot, was that Roosevelt undermined French prestige by whisper-

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ing in Arab ears. On the other hand, Truman, an angel to a devil, could act with the strength and passion that Moslems understand. That Roosevelt and Truman were both Democrats was, to him, beside any point.

"Roosevelt was dangerous because he was an idealist, and knew the power of words. Truman was more like a Frenchman—a realist. He sent troops into Korea and before that he decided to end the Japanese war with an atomic bomb. He would know what should be done in Egypt right now!"

"What about Eisenhower?" I asked, noticing *Crusade in Europe* on the shelf alongside General de Gaulle's latest *Memoirs*. Bernard had fought as an officer in both World Wars, and his sister had been martyred in a concentration camp for her resistance work with the Free French.

"He's a good soldier, but since he left France in 1952, he seems not to know what has been going on here. If he had remembered his lessons from the time he spent in North Africa during the war, he should have ordered Foster Dulles to read the *Koran* every morning. Americans might then have been influenced to realize that Allah loves strong men, and now only the Soviets look strong to the Moslems."

There was a knock at the door. Monsieur Bernard said "*Entrez*." It opened, admitting one of the Arab workers with the powder-blue jackets. He held his work cap in front of his chest, waiting to be told it was all right for him to interrupt us.

"*Bonjour, Kazam, Qu'est-ce qu'il y a?*"

Bernard apologized to me for the interruption, but asked me to listen because I would find it interesting.

Kazam, who looked to be in his late fifties, explained that his wife in Algeria was sick. Besides, his blind daughter had become sick in the mind, and there was nobody to tend his olive grove nor to inspect his *moutons*, which had become temporarily a part of his neighbor's sheep herd. Kazam's sheep had been tended by an Algerian who joined the rebels.

Bernard listened attentively, and offered sympathy to Kazam. He told him that he would give him a month off from the plant.

"First, however, I will have to make travel arrangements with the Ministère des Affaires Sociales; as you know, Kazam, we will need special permission for you to go home because of the travel ban." Bernard used the familiar "*tu*" rather than the formal "*vous*" in addressing Kazam, a familiarity parents use with children.

Kazam smiled, thanked his *patron*, and left.

"Of course, I will let Kazam take leave," Bernard said. "I know there is nothing more important than family matters. And Kazam, like me, is a religious man. Besides, I need Kazam. He has worked for me twelve years. Without him I could not count on the work of the other Algerians. He is top man, and since he is the oldest, I depend on him to control the others. Arabs need discipline because they do not understand individual liberty."

Explaining that giving him leave would assure the loyalty that would make him return, Bernard added:

"I must be benevolent. As a Frenchman, I must be strong and kind. I must prove that we French know how to handle the Moslems. Your countrymen reproach us for colonialism, and so do the Russians. With Kazam, I will demonstrate that we French are not weak, degenerate and beaten. The Americans talk about human relations in industry, but who can teach me about humanism?"

Taking off his smock (and revealing the *croix-de-guerre* on his lapel), Bernard affably shifted his mood, suggested that we take the offensive in the battle against hunger—"It is time for lunch, and I want you to try the cold salmon at a new place in the Bois de Boulogne. After lunch, we can come back to the factory and you can talk alone with Kazam. You wanted to meet an Algerian, and now you have your chance."

I had heard spirited discussions by French social scientists of such questions as: "Will Islamic civilization adapt to the pace of the machine age?" or "Can Islam survive industrial civilization?" But it turned out that Kazam was more punctual for our three o'clock rendezvous than we were. The cold salmon and mayonnaise and Pouilly wines had been engrossing, as were Monsieur Bernard's theories about the disasters Mendès-France was to bring to France with his campaign to encourage adults to drink milk instead of wine. Kazam was waiting for us at the door of the office as we drove up in the *patron's* black Citroën.

Bernard put me behind his desk, and, dressed once again in his white smock, set off to investigate the afternoon production.

"So you are on your way back to Algeria?" I said.

"Yes, monsieur, to see my sheep and wife and daughter. They are in a village near Constantine." Kazam told me he would not be able to go without the intervention of Monsieur Bernard, a brave man, who had helped him out in earlier difficulties. For example, the trouble he had had a few months earlier in burying his brother, who worked at the Simca automobile factory.

"Ahmed died of a heart attack; he was my younger brother; I asked the *patron* if I could leave work to arrange a funeral and to notify the relatives in Algeria; he said that I could have a leave, but he did more than that."

I gathered that Ahmed was now buried, in dignity, in a Moslem cemetery near Paris with the benefit of prayers by an *imam* Bernard had obtained from the mosque in the Latin Quarter in Paris. The *patron* had sought a prayer leader for Ahmed's funeral by consulting a French *officier des affaires indigènes*, an ex-colonial service officer who had done twenty years of duty in Morocco and now worked as commandant of an Algerian workers' barracks near Paris.

"You know, monsieur, my *patron* even offered to pay the expenses of the funeral until I assured him that Simca's social service fund would pay. But he gave me 2,000 francs for the cables I asked the French officer to send to my relatives. The officer at the workers' barracks speaks and writes Arabic, and the *patron* asks

him to help us out when we need a scribe."

Bernard came back to his office just as Kazam was beginning to tell me that the *patron* was like a father to him, and that he did not understand the fighting in Algeria. We stopped our "interview" because the *patron* needed to work at his desk, and Kazam had to prepare for his trip.

"Allah respects a man like Kazam" Bernard said to me after the door closed. "He has real guts, and if he told you he did not understand what is going on in Algeria, it is not because he has not tasted some of the trouble right here in Paris." I learned that Kazam had run the risk of being knifed by other Algerians in Paris because he would not participate in a sympathy strike by an Islamic fraternal organization protesting the Algerian war.

"Kazam refused to budge from his post even when he received warnings," his boss said. Every year he was posted to guard the plant when it shut down for the three-week vacation. Bernard had asked him: "If your comrades tell you to go on strike during the vacation, when you are alone with the factory, what will you do, Kazam?"

The Arab had assured him he would not leave the plant unprotected, that he would be on guard despite the threats. According to Bernard, Kazam did indeed watch faithfully and said his prayers daily.

Four years later, I found Bernard again in Paris, helping France celebrate, in splendid solitude, her *grandeur*. The February 13th bomb had exploded in the Sahara. An Air France plane putting me down at Orly had flown low over the vast atomic energy research plant, and a Frenchman in the next seat had proudly pointed it out to me, with no word about nearby Versailles.

"*Tant mieux*," Bernard said of that, when we met. "Allah loves strong men."

I did not learn until later that Kazam had been killed fighting the French in his olive orchard near Constantine. He had never returned to Bernard's factory.

HIROSHIMA IN AMERICA

AMITAI ETZIONI

The film "Hiroshima, Mon Amour," which is getting a good deal of attention in this country, deserves to be viewed—and reviewed—from a number of perspectives. But I have noticed that reviewers have

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all tended *not* to explore its moral substance, what the vernacular would call its "message." This is remarkable when a film's message is expressed as urgently as this one's is, and even more remarkable when it is expressed with success *cinematically*, when it is perfectly fused with a web of images and sounds. Here is a film that contradicts the widely-held assumption that messages and good aesthetics are incompatible.

A composite of most of the American magazine reviews would tell us something like this. ACTING: first-rate. The performance of Emmanuelle Rive in the role of a French actress participating in a film shot in the rebuilt Hiroshima was considered "remarkable," while that of Eiji Okada in the role of her lover, a Japanese architect, was called "commendable." DIRECTION: even more praiseworthy. One reviewer wrote, "Although these lead roles are portrayed with unusual sensitivity and strength . . . 'Hiroshima, Mon Amour' is distinctly a director's picture. Almost as important as the two actors portraying the lovers are the buildings (both exteriors and interiors) and the streets of Hiroshima and Nevers which Alain Resnais uses so effectively, with the help of the sound track, to bring time past and time present together" (Philip T. Hartung, *Commonweal*). The fusion of IMAGE AND SOUND was praised by several reviewers as "lyrical." "The story [is] told through the sensitive camera, the voices of the woman and man, through the music of the sound track, and through the faces and gestures of the principal actors" (Hollis Alpert, *Saturday Review*). Consensus: an artistically effective movie, neither seminar nor symposium. (I have not seen Dwight Macdonald's review in *Esquire* at this writing, by the way.)

Turning from evaluation to interpretation, several kinds of analyses are reflected in the reviews. One takes the intrinsic-symbolic line. Since this movie deals with a love affair whose "shots" are interspersed with scenes from the bombed Hiroshima, love-and-death seems to be the theme: the destructive power of illicit love, the eruption of sex and the violence done to Hiroshima, the fact that this intense affair can last only one night and takes place in a doomed city, all these combine in a powerful double perspective. It is also pointed out that the fragmentary style of the movie, the frequent flashbacks and the monologic nature of the speaking script, approximate the stream of consciousness (Moirá Walsh, *America*).

Another group is more psychoanalytical. The first affair, French girl and German soldier, ended when she found him fatally wounded and spent the night with his cooling body. The people of her town, Nevers, shaved her head the next morning. These traumatic experiences—violation of the taboo, death of the first love, and the tribe's ostracism—sent her into months of insanity. In the present affair, she finds the Japanese lover painfully reminiscent of the German (she "slips" and calls him by the German's name). "The re-enactment and recollection of her first lover presumably have a therapeutic effect. A torrent of emotion bursts from dykes vigilantly guarded for fifteen years, and at the end we are entitled to suppose—the picture has become increasingly dream-like—that she will return to Paris in a far health-

ier state" (Robert Hatch, *The Nation*). The Japanese involved in this fruitless and tortuous affair is, as another reviewer points out, a masochist by nature.

All these comments are, of course, quite legitimate and relevant. But what about the message? To be fair, all reviewers did mention that this is a pacifist or anti-A-bomb movie, as one might have guessed from the title; but most of them did not bother to report what it is the movie has to say about pacifism or the bomb. After all, pacifism is a vague label, and the bomb gets into almost any discussion of contemporary events. John McCarten, in the *New Yorker*, did go so far as to tell us that the director "is a pacifist, all right, yet in his appeal for peace he sees to it that his camera, rather than his sound, establishes his points," but he did not say what those points are. Reporting extensively on the movie in "A Letter from Paris," Genêt (the *New Yorker*) takes the sociologistic way out of discussing the message: instead of recounting it, she accounts for it by a sociopolitical placing of the director and writer.

"Hiroshima, Mon Amour," is a film of pacifism—a pacifism that stems, basically, from the two politically experienced brains that produced it, turning it into artistry. Whatever director Resnais's precise political attachments may be, he is clearly angry in a world of constantly increasing atomic bombs. The well known novelist Mlle. Marguerite Duras, who wrote the film scenario and dialogue, was, she declared in a recent interview, a Communist Party member until she was thrown out for the heresy of her views on Budapest, and she is certainly anti-bomb where the American devastation of Hiroshima is concerned.

Mlle. Duras might just be anti-bomb, whoever is concerned; her Budapest heresy could be an indicator of that. But what's the difference? The background of an author can explain in part the sources of his "position," but what is the position?

One reviewer, Hollis Alpert, did approach the where, when, and how of pacifism in the movie: "It is pervaded by a profoundly pacifist feeling, for the individual German soldier no longer seems the enemy he once was, nor does the Japanese of the present . . . What is to be hated now are the blistering forces that sear and destroy life, that collect individual human lives into ranks of enemies." The other reviewer audacious enough to refer to the didactic point was Madelein Chapsal in *The Reporter*, who states the film's intention: "to remind us that we are both the victims and the masters of war." She finds the "ultimate meaning . . . all in the title: Love must concern itself with its extreme opposite, the hatefulness of war."

The message of "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" does not lie in the conventional theme of love and death, it seems to me. This is not one of a thousand movies about love and war and romantic in its view of both. The scene is the rebuilt Hiroshima; missing are the shots of bombardment, trenches, rushing ambulances and combat which furnish the usual settings for love-in-war movies, from "A Farewell to Arms" to "The Young Lions." This

is a "story" of the hatred and love which cause wars, rather than the love and hatred affected by war, rather than a girl, a boy, and war as an interfering villain. This movie assumes that we know that an atomic bomb has horrible effects. The horror scenes occur at the beginning of the movie and are used to set an emotional tone and to create a sense of immediacy that will impel us to reexamine old sentiments.

The message is stated not through the usual fable or character development, but by a rapid switching of perspectives. At the beginning we meet what by society's standards is a "bad girl." We learn that she and her lover are happily married, but not to each other, and that he picked her up in a bar the preceding evening; when the movie opens with a close-up of their nude embrace, she has yet to ask his name. When the embrace is relaxed we suddenly learn that she is Caucasian and he Japanese, and the affair is what one reviewer called "miscegenation." Thus, the woman has violated many mores: those of family, nation, and race. Yet from the very beginning we feel attracted to her, for her looks are pleasant, though not striking, not sexy; she looks healthy and faintly familiar, neither blonde nor very young. From its beginning the movie teaches us not to dislike her.

Gradually we are made to share the heroine's recollected pain. She was eighteen when she loved a German soldier; it was her first love; with each other, the lovers were oblivious to the war; after his death she spent months in her parents' cellar in mindless grief. It is chiefly the cellar scenes, the longest and most painful in their detail, which change the viewer's feeling for the girl. Maybe she is not bad. Maybe there is love which surpasses national loyalties. And maybe—the camera returns to Hiroshima—nationalism created the bomb. With the shift in our sentiments toward the girl, our sentiments about nations are unsettled. We are urged to reexamine old loyalties. This change in sentiment is the only dynamic, the only genuine "story" in the movie.

"Hiroshima, Mon Amour" suggests that national biases and stereotypes are of the same class as racial prejudices. Both are in-group loyalties based on violent hatred toward outsiders. The film indicts codes which censor racial judgments but glorify national distinctions. The racial and the national construct the same kind of boundary, a boundary which produces Hiroshimas, a boundary which can only be overcome with unrestrained and unconventional love. The world in which such love—love which transcends such boundaries—is hopeless and illicit, is the world which gave us Hiroshima.

Herein lies the answer to what some reviewers considered the riddle of the movie. When the movie opens he says to her, "Still, you know nothing of Hiroshima." She reports the horror she has seen in pictures and in the museum devoted to the city blasted with radioactive fire, but he is not convinced. Again and again he repeats, "Still, you know *nothing* of Hiroshima." Then she reveals her first affair and her exposure to hatred in her own Nevers, and he realizes that she does know, for she has experienced the deeper sources of Hiroshima, not the external scars but the kind of emotions which

exploded the bomb. At the close of the movie she murmurs, "Your name is Hiroshima." This time he does not repeat his line, but offers recognition of her knowledge: he replies, "And your name is Nevers." Each knows the lesson so well that each is the very knowledge.

Movie reviewers seem to be limited in imagination when they complain that the movie has a psychological but not a chronological sequence, a stream of consciousness instead of a plot, and assert that it is too fragmentary. In fact, this form of expression, making use of the cinema's almost unlimited ability to shift scenes, is especially well-suited to the message. The director wishes to prevent involvement of an elementary sort, to keep us from thinking about this affair as an isolated event of a woman, a man, and a night. It is through the rapid succession of flashbacks and interspersed shots that he projects the French-German affair on the Caucasian-Japanese affair and expands both with scenes of the bombed Hiroshima so as to build the association between interracial hatred, international hatred, and Hiroshima.

The dynamic of the movie is not, and should not be, that of the development of an affair, but that of our feelings toward the heroine. We begin—depending on our degree of liberation from conventional norms and prejudices—by feeling surprise or dismay; we end by understanding, sympathizing, perhaps even hoping. This movie asserts that the day when such transcending love is no longer hopeless will be the day Hiroshima ceases to be a symbol of what we may expect of the future. At a time when film criticism tends to ignore messages, and to assume *a priori* that a message and artistry are necessarily incompatible, "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" deserves the closest attention. So does its message.

CONTRA MR. CORT

AN EXCHANGE

Mr. David Cort's "The End of Slavery?" [Fall, 1960] is one of the most shamelessly reactionary statements I've seen in any respectable journal recently. The author makes some points which, if they were made temperately, and with some attempt at historical perspective, would be worthy of earnest consideration. But he couches them in a demagogic, Buckleyan rhetoric—*vide* the snide reference to the raped Belgian ladies, which I'll return to in a moment—that makes it almost impossible to take the central argument seriously.

Let's give Mr. Cort the benefit of whatever doubt may exist by concentrating on the Congo problem. This is generally accepted as a classic case of a colony "set free" before it was ready for freedom. But why wasn't it ready? Because the Belgians deliberately refrained from preparing it. As a matter of settled policy, they gave the Con-

golese only the bare minimum of training needed to make them industrially usable; *pas d'élites, pas d'ennuis* (no elite, no worries) was their motto. Now, what does Mr. Cort want? Should the Belgians have been rewarded for their deliberately retrograde policy by being allowed to go on exploiting the Congo indefinitely? This would seem to be the logical outcome of his position.

But it won't do. Ideally, there should be a United Nations African Authority, perhaps under the Trusteeship Council. This should consist of a directing Board—from which the United States and the European Great Powers, and all other present or former holders of colonies (Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, Italy) would be debarred. This body would make the decisions, and a special Bureau of the Secretariat would carry them out. The Board would award trusteeships or guardianships among those of its members capable of handling them, and would exclude Great Powers and colonizers from all positions of actual or potential political authority in the area. All technicians, administrators and such would be paid by the African Authority and would be responsible solely to it, whatever country they came from. In this way the continent could be insulated from Great Power rivalry and exploitation and allowed to develop in the manner proper to it. I would not like to bet, however, on such a plan's chances of adoption by the United Nations as now constituted.

All these are serious problems deserving serious attention, but Mr. Cort will have none of it. Instead, he demonstrates his fertility in false parallels, out-of-context quotations, and appeals to the most vulgar and dangerous emotions.

His most ambitious historical parallel—the one between post-World War I Europe and present-day Africa—will not stand up, and neither will the attempt based on it to call up the ghost of Hitler. The "new" nations created after World War I—with the single arguable exception of Czechoslovakia—were quite genuine, if miniature, and represented integral peoples, most of which had been swallowed up earlier by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, or some other Great Power. The poor results of the post-World War I experiment were due not to self-determination but to the weakness of the League of Nations (for which the Western Powers and particularly our own isolationism were largely responsible), and to the context of East-West rivalry after World War II—whence the atomic bomb did nothing to help. The emerging nations of Black Africa, on the other hand, are not nations at all—having no cultural or historical unity—but artificial creations of European colonial policy. The difficulty with Africa is therefore not due to over-application of the principle of self-determination, but to insufficient application of it.

At several other points, Mr. Cort is inaccurate, misleading, or mischievous. For instance: Peter Ritner, in the article which Mr. Cort quotes, was not calling for blood but predicting it, which is a very different thing. By Mr. Cort's logic, anyone who before 1939 protested against Hitler's treatment of the Jews would have to be classified a warmonger.

(continued on page 52)

Columbia

CHRONICLE

A concise review
of recent news from
Columbia University

More than 15,000 Columbia University students of voting age were wooed this fall by a number of prominent political figures who spoke on the campus. The speakers included John Kenneth Galbraith and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., advisers to Senator Kennedy; former New York Governor Averell Harriman; New York State Democratic Club Chairman Michael H. Prendergast; Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller; Carmine de Sapio, New York County Democratic Chairman; Republican Senators Jacob K. Javits and Kenneth Keating; Thomas K. Finletter, former Secretary of the Air Force; and Helen Gahagan Douglas, former U. S. Congresswoman. The only presidential candidate to appear on campus was Eric Haas of the Socialist Labor Party.

In October, the president of the young Republican Club at Columbia measured political sentiment among the University's students at about 3-to-1 Democratic. "There just aren't many Republicans around here," he said. The margin was greater among Columbia College faculty members, who, according to a poll conducted by the *Columbia Daily Spectator*,

favoring Senator Kennedy 98-10 over Vice President Nixon. The *Spectator* reported that many of the undecided voters were "very much disappointed" with both nominees.

• The advisability of revising the introductory science program at Columbia College in order to expose liberal arts students to a general and unified scientific study, was discussed this fall in a series of articles appearing in the *Columbia Daily Spectator*. The existing program of study, which was criticized by the 1957 President's Committee on the Educational Future of the University as the "least satisfactory feature of the concept of 'general education' in the curriculum of the College," requires that undergraduates take one subject from two of the following groups: 1) mathematics 2) chemistry, physics, and astronomy 3) botany, geology, psychology, and zoology.

The *Spectator* series found most members of the science faculty at the College decidedly cool toward modifying the existing program into a unified course that would decrease a student's proficiency in a specific discipline in order to emphasize the comprehensive relevance of science to culture. Dr. Lloyd Motz, associate professor of astronomy, one of a small group of scientists on campus who favors a unified science course, was quoted as believing in the feasibility of a course of study that would teach the student "how scientific fundamentals formulate today's world," but need not compel the detailed study aimed at producing experts in specific fields. Opposing a unified course, physics department chairman Polykarp Kusch asserted that science must be presented to the non-scientist in a "substantial, penetrating treatment"; he said that the student "will gain a deeper understanding of science philosophy and aims by specializing." Dr. Kusch called a unified course "dilletantish smattering and dabbling in all the sciences, proclaiming a unity of the sciences which does not exist."

• Joseph D. Coffee, Jr., director of development for Columbia College since 1950, was recently named Assistant to the President for Alumni Affairs at Columbia University. Dr.

Levering Tyson, who had held the post, has become a Special Assistant to President Grayson Kirk.

• Three significant advances toward understanding the relation between the organic nerve and the electrical impulses that travel along it were reported this fall by scientists working in the department of neurology at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. Recent laboratory discoveries have given heavy support to the theory, propounded in 1940 by Dr. David Nachmansohn, professor of biochemistry, that the physiological compound, acetylcholine, is active throughout each nerve and is a key participant in all bioelectrical processes.

When a nerve is stimulated, acetylcholine is released, and combines with a "receptor protein." This "acetylcholine receptor protein" was isolated in solution for the first time by Dr. Seymour Ehrenpreis in another phase of the research. The combination of acetylcholine and the protein then allows electrically charged sodium ions to enter the nerve cell membrane and, in so doing, set up a small electric current. An enzyme called cholinesterase shuts off the current at any point within a few millionths of a second by destroying the free acetylcholine. An anaesthetic acts by combining with the receptor protein, blocking out the acetylcholine.

Previously, curare, which works between muscles and nerves when it is injected into the blood stream, was thought to affect only nerve endings, so that neurologists believed that the nerve endings were composed of different material from the rest of the nerve. By stripping a nerve down to a single fiber, Dr. Wolf-Dietrich Dettbarn showed that curare failed to stop electrical signals along a nerve not because the nerve endings are composed of different material from the nerve itself, but because curare cannot penetrate the fatty tissue around the center portion of the nerve and combine with the protein. Thus, for the first time, the effectiveness of local anaesthetics can be explained: they combine specifically with the receptor protein, blocking all electrical action,

A small population of Neanderthals

New traces of man's beginnings—a bounteous supply of prehistoric human skeletons, artifacts, and animal and plant remains—were brought to light this summer by a group of anthropologists and archaeologists from Columbia University and the Smithsonian Institution during their most recent exploration of Shanidar Cave and the ancient village of Zawi Chemi Shanidar in Iraq [FORUM, Spring 1960].

Dr. Ralph Solecki, assistant professor of anthropology at Columbia, reported that his group unearthed three rare Neanderthal skeletons from different levels of rubble in Shanidar Cave, their estimated ages ranging from 45,000 to 70,000 years. The group also removed the postcranial remains of Shanidar I, an arthritic amputee about 45,000 years old, who was found, along with two other Neanderthal skeletons, by the Solecki group in 1957. Dr. Solecki pointed out that too few Neanderthal specimens have been recovered for science to establish their exact relationship, if any, to *Homo sapiens*. (Fragments of about a hundred such are known, but complete skeletons are rare.) "Actually, what we're getting from Shanidar Cave is a small population of Neanderthals," the anthropologist said. "Heretofore, we have had only scraps of local finds." Six of the Neanderthal skeletons (includ-

ing that of an infant found by Dr. Solecki at Shanidar in 1953) have been sent to the directorate general of antiquities of Iraq in Baghdad. The seventh will go to the Smithsonian Institution for study.

Dr. Solecki also reported that material deposited in the cave by winds, human habitation, and earth movements through the years shows a history of 'rapid' climate changes in that area: fir trees grew in Iraq 60,000 years ago; by climatic contrast, date palms flourished 45,000 years ago; and wild wheat was found in a layer 26,000 to 35,000 years old.

Excavating another layer in the cave, the group came upon a cemetery with 26 *Homo sapiens* skeletons dating from 8500 B.C. Apparently these cave people had favored the nearby village of Zawi Chemi Shanidar during the summer months. Dr. Rose Solecki, who had explored the buried village in 1957, uncovered this summer a large number of land snail shells and animal bones, as well as delicate flint blades, well-made beads and stone pendants, bone awls, and stone animal-skin scrapers. A hand-sized rubbing stone, used to grind foods, indicated, she said, that "these people were emerging, if not fully emerged," from hunting and gathering to farming.

and thus achieve their sensation-deadening effects.

This new understanding of nerve action has given the scientists data that can be expected to facilitate the devising of drugs for treating such disorders as Parkinson's disease and myasthenia gravis, as well as aiding the development of new, safe and effective anaesthetics. The research was supported by the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

● A recommendation that chronically unemployed men just under 65 be allowed to retire and collect pensions was advanced in a report issued this fall by A. A. Jaffe and J. R. Milavsky of Columbia's Bureau of Applied Social Research. The study found that a "no man's land" existed just below the pension age of 65 for men. Having exhausted the unemployment compensation due them, such men can neither retire nor work, the report concluded. "With increasing age it becomes much more difficult for men to obtain employment, so that many . . . who lose their jobs become chronically unemployed." The report noted

that men 55 and over constituted 19 per cent of the unemployed, but only 9 per cent of the men working. The pensions referred to are both Social Security payments and industry retirement plans. The study also dealt with safeguards in such a pension program to prevent abuses.

● Percy Uris, chairman of the board of Uris Brothers, a New York building firm, was recently elected to life membership in the Columbia University Trustees. Harold F. McGuire, senior partner of a New York law firm, was named an Alumni Trustee, succeeding William T. Taylor.

● After eight months of envisioning Washington, D. C., in the year 2000, fifteen graduate students in the Columbia University School of Architecture recently displayed their proposals for improving the center of the nation's capital, a six-square-mile area that includes George Washington University, the Capitol, the White House, monuments, stores, and other facilities. The exhibition toured Washington, Oklahoma City, and New York.

Considering the future expansion of present facilities, as well as the

building of new ones, the group concluded that a mass transportation system would be of first importance, not only to service these areas but also to avoid a clutter of automobiles obscuring Washington's broad vistas. The students proposed an elaborate new railway connecting the commuter facilities that now serve the city to a downtown subway loop; express freeways with parking garages near proposed transit stops; the use of the Mall as a purely pedestrian promenade; and the creation of 'superblocks' containing present business areas, with all traffic routed around their edges and parking and delivery areas placed underneath pedestrian plazas. The group also suggested the development of an East Mall, to include future government buildings, a performing arts center, a science center, and a new university.

The Washington Junior Chamber of Commerce, sponsors of the study (with the cooperation of the National Capital Planning Commission and the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade) had sought out the Columbia students [FORUM, Winter 1960] for fresh ideas to assist professional planners.

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For instance: "Africa for the Africans" may be a bad slogan, but it is certainly better than "Africa for the Europeans"—including the Americans. Responsible Africans do not want to exclude whites from the continent. They want to be masters in their own house.

For instance: there is the matter of the raped Belgian ladies. Now no civilized person approves of rape—at least when practiced on his own people. But, equally, no responsible person uses it to make political points. The next stop on that line is would-you-want-your-daughter-to-marry-a-Negro. Mr. Cort makes no mention of the Africans raped or enslaved by Europeans over the centuries.

Finally, Mr. Cort's last sentence implies that the Africans are slaves by nature and inevitably. This is not true unless we make it so. If the black peoples are re-enslaved now, at least they will have found their own masters, which is all that most of us can expect.

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David Cort writes:

The rich aromas of hot buttered liberalism float off Mr. Stephen Dunn's remarks; by contrast, I must indeed seem reactionary. But it occurs to me now that this African adventure, grounded in liberalism, may be the death of liberalism; and such an event would dismay me.

I wrote that I do not believe that what has been done in Black Africa can be reversed; but let us, please, see what we are looking at; in that case perhaps we can help.

The Congo failure is only one of degree; all the other new states have failed to replace tribal societies by even a genuine proletariat, and have merely superimposed on a society in flux a superficial Western-style regime. This can only result in the same sorts of criminal elite as those now ruling most of Asia, who simply rush the hard cash to Swiss banks. The richest politicians in the world, rivaling the Arabs, will presently be Africans.

As to whether Peter Ritner predicts or incites the blood bath, some words have powerful vibrations; "kill" is such a word, so that the rest of the sentence is hardly heard. In his book, Ritner advocates smuggling weapons and leaders into South Africa, and leading armies of conquest into Southwest Africa and the two Portuguese colonies.

Balancing the rape of Belgian ladies against the unspecified rape of Congolese ladies is bankrupt morality. Is this the kind of world we want, where we even up all the violences?

The world fallacy just now is that a nation can be called into existence by decree, and that any such whimsical evocation is "a good thing," indeed a wonderful thing. The European nations Mr. Dunn speaks of are true, and proud nations; unfortunately we do not yet have a world where that is enough; a nation must also be able to survive. There are the elements of some true, and proud, nations in Black Africa, but they have not even been considered, much less created. A history is necessary to a nation, which is a group of people who agree to get along with one another about 75 per cent of the time; these African "nations" have no histories. And the histories they will soon acquire will be better forgotten.

I must pass over Mr. Dunn's remarks on events before 1939, when he must have been about nine years old, a good age at the time.

